ABORTION AS A TABOO TOPIC: A NETWORK TEXT ANALYSIS OF ABORTION DISCLOSURE DECISIONS AND BOUNDARY COORDINATION

by

Robin Leigh Heaton

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STATEMENT OF DISSERTATION APPROVAL

The dissertation of **Robin Leigh Heaton**

has been approved by the following supervisory committee members:

Mark Bergstrom	, Chair	**04-27-11**
		Date Approved
L. Edna Rogers	, Member	**04-27-11**
		Date Approved
Dennis Alexander	, Member	**04-27-11**
		Date Approved
Connie Bullis	, Member	**04-27-11**
		Date Approved
Jane Dyer	, Member	**04-27-11**
		Date Approved
Ann Darling	, Member	**04-27-11**
		Date Approved

and by **Ann Darling**, Chair of the Department of **Communication**

and by Charles A. Wight, Dean of The Graduate School.

ABSTRACT

This study extends the body of research on self-disclosure of taboo topics through the theoretical lens of Petronio's communication privacy management (CPM). When faced with an unintended pregnancy, women must make decisions about to whom they can reveal this potentially risky information. This study investigates and identifies the rule based process women use to decide when to disclose and when to remain private.

Two distinct research methodologies provide analysis of 2,000 pages and more than 60 hours of qualitative respondent interview text. First, interview text was analyzed using the artificial neural network software known as CATPAC to discover clusters of meaning represented in the interviews. Second, a more traditional, qualitative textual analysis was employed to uncover the rules of disclosure for each of the clusters identified by CATPAC. Analysis of who women chose to disclose to resulted in the identification of eight clusters of meaning and nine categories of rules for disclosure. Analysis of who women chose not to disclose to resulted in six clusters of meaning and 13 categories of rules for nondisclosure.

Results suggest that respondents primarily chose female confidants with whom they had a positive history of communication regarding taboo topics as well as knowledge of her previous experience with pregnancy, abortion or childbirth. Respondents kept this information private from any individuals in her life she believed would interfere with her choice or possibly perceive her negatively (i.e., impression

management) as a result of her decision to terminate a pregnancy. Analysis revealed relationship labels, general and specific clusters of meaning, and disclosure rules that enrich the CPM literature. Complete results, practical implications and suggestions for future research are presented.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Self-disclosure is one of the most prolific areas of study in the field of communication. Defined loosely as the process by which one person verbally reveals information about himself or herself (including thoughts, feelings, and experiences) to another person (Derlega, Metts, Petronio, & Margulis, 1993), self-disclosure was originally thought to be the equivalent of effective communication and paramount to the development of close relationships. Only recently have scholars begun to pay attention to the notion that disclosure can be risky to the self as well as relationships. For example, revealing information about taboo topics carries an inherent risk (i.e., sexual preference, illicit drug use, criminal activity). While self-disclosure can be beneficial in certain circumstances, individuals actively make decisions as to whether or not certain topic and recipient combinations will result in positive or negative disclosure outcomes. Therefore self-disclosure, privacy management, and boundary coordination are a critical part of interpersonal communication (Petronio, 2002) especially when topics of a taboo nature are involved.

Issues related to sexuality are among the most taboo in the United States. Not surprisingly, "the current level of births to adolescents continues to be much higher in the United States than in most other developed countries" (Darroch, Singh & Frost, 2001, p. 244). The rate of unintended pregnancies in the U.S. is two to four times higher than

Sweden, France, Canada and Great Britain (p. 249) with half all unintended pregnancies in the U.S. ending in abortion (Finer & Henshaw, 2006, p. 90). Controversies related to sexuality and unintended pregnancies are encompassed in religious, political and social realms. The nexus of these three realms work to maintain the taboo status of any topic related to sex thereby forming an unwritten rule that sexuality should not be talked about publicly or privately. Privately, individuals have risked unintended pregnancy or even their lives rather than risk the "embarrassment" of talking with their partner about condoms (Reel & Thompson, 1994) or disclosing their sexual history (Lucchetti, 1999). Publicly, the taboo nature of this topic has forced every state in this country to develop legislative policies restricting how sexuality education can be taught in public schools. People frequently disagree about the advisability of teaching sex education in schools, of allowing teenagers open access to birth control information, and of talking about sex in the family context (Wilson, 1998). No one solution will put an end to these disagreements, yet there is one opinion shared by most - unintended pregnancy is not desirable (Warren, 1995).

Central to the taboo topics associated with sex and unintended pregnancy is the issue of abortion. A woman's choice to terminate a pregnancy is a hotly contested and divisive issue. Nearly four decades after the decision of Roe v. Wade, which legalized the right to have an abortion, the issue of abortion is still an impetus for social violence, religious turmoil, and political upheaval. In the 37 years since the Supreme Court decided Roe v. Wade, anti-abortionists have performed 26 acts of murder and attempted murder, 108 acid attacks, 41 bombings and 175 acts of arson (Paretsky, 2009). Eight people including four doctors, three clinic workers and a policeman were murdered by abortion

opponents between 1993 and 1998. On May 31, 2009, Dr. George Tiller, a Kansas physician who provided later-term abortions, became the ninth victim when he was fatally shot in the foyer of his church. Prior to this attack, Dr. Tiller was shot in both arms in 1993 and survived a 1985 bombing of his clinic (LoBianco, 2009). Less violent protesters frequently block entrances to abortion clinics verbally and sometimes physically harassing women attempting to gain entry. Regardless of the tactics, the message is very clear - abortion is a controversial and dangerous topic/service.

In spite of the danger and negative social attitude toward abortion, millions of American women make the choice to terminate a pregnancy every year. For many of them this decision is highly traumatic and produces a need to seek support or advice thus creating "competing needs that must be balanced: the need to share personal information and the need to preserve a sense of privacy" (Derlega, Metts, Petronio, & Margulis, 1993, p. 66). The need humans feel to share personal information stems from a number of practical as well as emotional needs. In the case of choosing to terminate a pregnancy, women may find themselves in a situation where they do not want to disclose but they need financial support, transportation, child care, information or other resources that require they disclose their decision to someone who is in a position to offer tangible assistance.

Aside from practical considerations, many women report that an unintended pregnancy represents a crisis in their lives. They are torn between the knowledge that they are not able to properly care for a child and the negative social perceptions of women who choose abortion. Thus, privacy management of abortion topics becomes of central importance. Major and Gramzow (1999) followed 442 women for 2 years after

they had terminated a pregnancy. Results suggest that women who perceive abortion as stigmatizing reported a greater need to keep their abortion a secret. The act of suppressing this information was associated with "increased depression, anxiety, and hostility over the two-year follow-up" (p. 334). Conversely, disclosure was associated with decreases in anxiety, depression and hostility among those women who reported intrusive thoughts with regard to the abortion but did not perceive it as stigmatizing. Derlega et al. (1993) suggest:

> The act of self-disclosure may relieve feelings of guilt and shame over difficulties that were previously kept hidden. The act of disclosure may help persons see themselves more positively because they have divulged the information. On the other hand, persons who have not disclosed to anyone about painful events in their lives may feel worse and more ashamed about themselves because they infer from the act of concealing that the information is negative. (p. 96)

Finally, supportive reactions from others convey the impression that the woman is accepted, cared for, and understood (Wills, 1990).

James Pennebaker (1995) argues that the benefits of self-disclosure go deeper than just relief from emotional discomfort. His theory of inhibition suggests that concealing one's thoughts and feelings is stressful and expected to damage one's physical as well as psychological health. To actively harbor emotionally sensitive information requires physiological work thereby increasing stress levels. Conceivably, the act of sharing a secret is cathartic and relieves some of the physical burden of maintaining that secret. Unfortunately, disclosure of personal information is not always beneficial to the discloser. Disclosure of personal information to another is always risky.

Despite the benefits of self-disclosure, individuals incur risks in sharing taboo or upsetting personal experiences with others. The disclosure of personal information may at least temporarily generate discomfort in the speaker and cause the listener to feel upset

and embarrassed. Another risk is that if negative feelings are aroused in the listener, the discloser may experience rejection (Derlega et al., 1993). Respondents in the current study made the choice to terminate an unintended pregnancy. For these women, the exceptionally taboo nature of their choice may close down many avenues of support. Therefore, normal support networks may not be available or advisable given the social stigma surrounding their decision. Disclosers risk being embarrassed, being rejected by the recipient or of having the recipient not respect the privacy of the disclosure. Given the pros and cons of disclosure, Petronio (2002) suggests that "people do not in indiscriminately reveal private information because doing so would make them feel too vulnerable" (p. 29). People engage in boundary coordination by actively calculating how much they want to tell, the timing of their disclosure, and who they want to tell for the very reason that the information is risky. This begs the question, when confronted with an unintended pregnancy how and why did the respondents disclose their decision or quandary to some people and not others? Finding the answer to this question will provide insight into how to support and counsel women who have chosen abortion.

Research Perspective

Women who are contemplating an abortion confront the difficult decision of whether or not to seek support or advice from others. Although involving others in this aspect of their lives may have many benefits, the taboo nature of their choice could pose serious risks if disclosed. Risks include trusting private information to the wrong people, choosing an inappropriate time to disclose, being too open about ourselves or potentially endangering the confidant (Petronio, 2002). Given all the potential dangers involved in revealing personal information to another, it is safe to assume that this is not an act

individuals take lightly. Much thought and consideration goes into deciding whether or not to reveal private information and when that information is socially taboo the threat is even more severe.

In order to study how and why respondents made their disclosure choices, the current study is based on the theoretical foundation of Communication Privacy Management (CPM) (Petronio, 2002). CPM argues that a dialectical approach to studying the process of private disclosure is appropriate. Specifically, individuals must manage the dialectical tension of being public versus remaining private before deciding to disclose. Disclosure is a complex process of balancing whether the benefits of revealing private information about the self outweigh any potential consequences to the self or the relationship. Issues such as timing, depth of disclosure and cultural expectations are frequently taken into account before making the decision to be open. CPM also argues that before disclosing people will consider the qualities of and relationship they have with others before sharing private information. Therefore, Petronio (2002) presumes that "people make choices about revealing or concealing based on criteria and conditions they perceive as salient and that individuals fundamentally believe they have a right to own and regulate access to their private information" (p. 2).

CPM distinguishes itself from previous self-disclosure research in three significant ways. First, past research was less concerned with the content of the disclosure than it was simply with the disclosers themselves. In the early years of quantitative self-disclosure research three issues prevailed: (a) sex differences and self-disclosure, (b) self-disclosure and liking, and (c) reciprocity of self-disclosure. CPM makes private information, defined as the content of what is disclosed, a primary focal

point (Petronio, 2002). This distinction is an important one. Whereas previous disclosure research equated self-disclosure with intimacy, focusing on private information allows researchers "to explore the way privacy and intimacy are separate but related fundamentally to the act of disclosure" (Petronio, 2002, p. 5). Therefore, intimacy is one possible outcome of self-disclosure, but focusing on private information allows us to examine other possible consequences of disclosure including relationship termination.

Second, CPM theory argues that in order to be considered a process, disclosure cannot be just about the self. Instead, "CPM theory offers a privacy management system that identifies ways privacy boundaries are coordinated between and among individuals (Petronio, 2002, p. 3). This boundary metaphor helps to demonstrate the dialectic of being public and private. Individuals maintain personal boundaries when they manage their own private information. However, when private information is shared, privacy boundaries become collectively held and managed. Therefore, at any given time individuals can be managing their own private information through personal boundaries as well as information about others through collectively held boundaries. Boundary lines may be penetrable or impenetrable and gain or lose strength based on events in the lives of the disclosers. Individuals seek to strengthen the boundaries around their personal information while making decisions about who to include within their boundaries. Therefore, "boundaries function to identify ownership of information leading to subsequent control over who knows about private matters" (Petronio, 2002, p. 6).

Finally, while continuing to examine the process of how people disclose, CPM is the first theory to apply a rule-based theoretical system to conceptualize the process. This theory argues that people use rules to monitor how much of their private information gets

revealed or concealed. “Privacy rules are used in all matter of managing revealing and concealing, for example, in determining who receives a disclosure, when, how much or how little, where the disclosure occurs, and how a person might conceal information” (Petronio, 2002, p. 23). This three-step process of privacy rule management underlies all disclosure decisions.

The first step in the process deals with the foundation of privacy rules. Specifically, how the rules develop and what attributes they possess. Individuals develop their personal privacy rules using a variety of criteria from their lives. Many variables such as “cultural expectations, gender, motivation, context of the situation, and risk-benefit ratio” (Petronio, 2002, p. 23) guide the development of privacy rules. Some privacy rules are personally developed, many are learned through the process of socialization while others are negotiated as we form relationships and develop collective boundaries. For example, during the socialization process young children learn from their parents which topics are acceptable to discuss in public but may acquire different rules as they form friendships during adolescence. Therefore some privacy rules may remain stable throughout our lives while others are more flexible to allow for personal and relational growth and change (Petronio, 2002).

The second step in the process focuses on boundary coordination. Unique to CPM is the assumption that individuals maintain both personal and collective privacy boundaries. In addition to managing revealing or concealing our own private information, we may be entrusted with private information that belongs to someone else or even a group of people. Therefore, private information extends beyond the thoughts, experiences

and feelings of one individual (Petronio, 2002) making boundary coordination a necessity through linkage, ownership and permeability.

According to Petronio (2002), "boundary linkages represent the connections that form boundary alliances…and can potentially influence the level of commitment a person has to negotiate privacy management" (p. 29). Individuals may feel obligated to negotiate privacy rules with relational partners however, our obligation to information coming from strangers is less. Petronio (2002) uses the example of strangers on an airplane to illustrate this point. Someone may overhear private information being intended for another recipient. They may feel somewhat responsible for safeguarding the information although they were not the intended recipient of the information and therefore may feel less of an obligation to negotiate rules for its management.

Second, boundary ownership addresses private information being shared with others and therefore becoming "co-owned" (Petronio, 2002, p. 30). When making the decision to share private information with another there is an expectation that the confidant will respect the importance of that information. Therefore, "when information is co-owned, rules mark where and how the boundary lines are drawn" (p. 30). Boundary lines can be clearly drawn with the request that confidants "not tell this information to another living person" but the rules are not always so clearly defined. If a recipient breaches the expectations of the discloser, they may not be chosen to receive future information. Thus, ownership is not static. Boundary lines may be relaxed to include others when deemed necessary or tightened to exclude an individual who did not respect boundary rules.

Finally, the last component of boundary coordination is boundary permeability. Boundary permeability represents the level of access individuals grant to their private information. Highly permeability or thin boundaries represent open access to information and unrestricted disclosure (Petronio, 2002). The other end of the continuum contains thick boundaries where the information contained within is more likely to be private. With these boundaries, "people manage varying degrees of revealing and concealing" (p. 31). For example, individuals or collectives may completely hide information that is considered taboo or perhaps only grant access to select persons. Whereas in other situations or with other topics they may be completely open. In each case, "the permeability, that is how much information is allowed to pass through the boundary, varies depending on the rules for access and protection" (p. 32).

The last step in the boundary management process is turbulence. Because individuals simultaneously manage personal and collective privacy boundaries they may often experience conflict over expectations about privacy management. Turbulence may occur when "people violate or misuse privacy rules, hampering the ability to synchronize when, where, how and with whom private information might become publicly disclosed" (Petronio, 2002, p. 33). Turbulence may also occur when people have developed their privacy rules using different criteria, if they "perceive dissimilar levels of risk concerning revealing and concealing" (p. 33) or if the level of boundary permeability has not been properly coordinated. Boundary management is a complex process, occurring on many levels and encompassing a variety of variables. Boundary turbulence illustrates that boundary coordination is not always smooth and the boundary regulation is not a perfect system. CPM theory allows for self-correcting actions to take place in order for the

system to evolve and remain functional (Petronio, 2002). For example, people may change the rules to accommodate their changing needs, new situations and topics. CPM theory provides us with a way to understand the strategy and decision making processes that goes into handling the tension between revealing and concealing private information. The following literature review looks at the ways CPM has been used to study the management of privacy in a variety of contexts.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Jourard (1971) first defined self-disclosure as "the act of revealing personal information to others" (p. 2). Pearce and Sharp (1973) later added that self-disclosure was the voluntary sharing of information that could not be attained by any other means, with another person. More recent definitions, although similar, have added elements of sharing ones thoughts, feelings and experiences (Derlega, Metts, Petronio, & Margulis, 1993). Research on self-disclosure has been extensive and examines a variety of interpersonal relationships including adolescents and their parents (Afifi, Joseph & Aldeis, 2008; Hawk, Keijsers, Hale, & Meeus, 2009), stepfamilies (Afifi, 2003) and in-laws (Morr Serewicz & Canary, 2008). In the early days of self-disclosure research, three issues dominated quantitative research on relational self-disclosure: (a) sex differences and self-disclosure, (b) self-disclosure and liking, and (c) reciprocity of self-disclosure. Given the overwhelming amount of research focused on these three areas, several scholars have conducted meta-analyses as a way of condensing and summarizing the results. The following review of three meta-analyses productively compares and contrasts the immense amount of study as well as providing a summary review of how quantitative and qualitative research has studied self-disclosure.

The hypothesis that women self-disclose more than men has long dominated interpersonal research resulting in more studies on sex differences and self-disclosure than any other self-disclosure issue (Dindia, 2002). However, the results from these studies have been inconsistent. In 1992, Dindia and Allen conducted a meta-analysis of sex differences in self-disclosure. While the meta-analysis did support the hypothesis that women disclose more than men, the difference was small, r=.09 (d=.18, k=205, N=23,702), accounting for less than 1% of the total variance. Relying on previous research arguing that situational factors may contribute to the inconsistent findings, Dindia and Allen (1992), tested for several factors with the potential to affect self-disclosure. Specifically, Dindia and Allen (1992), "tested sex of target, relationship to target, measure of self-disclosure (including publication date and status), and interactions among sex of target, relationship to target, and measure of self-disclosure as potential moderators of sex differences in self-disclosure" (p. 111).

Year of publication and whether or not the study was published did not moderate sex differences in self-disclosure. How self-disclosure was measured, the sex of the target, and the relationship to target all resulted in small sex differences. It is interesting to note that self report measures and observational measures of self-disclosure all resulted in small sex differences. However, when participants were reporting on another's self-disclosure behavior, they reported that women disclosed moderately more than men. Dindia and Allen (1992) interpreted this as a result of gender stereotypes. That is, respondent reports were affected by the commonly accepted stereotype that women disclose more than men.

Small but significant results were also found when testing whether the sex of the target moderated sex differences in self-disclosure. Results suggest that women disclosed more to women than men disclosed to women; women disclosed more to women than men disclosed to men; women disclosed more to men than men disclosed to women; but women did not disclose more to men than men disclosed to men (Dindia & Allen, 1992). Additionally, sex differences were significantly greater to female and same-sex partners than to opposite-sex and male partners.

Finally, Dindia and Allen (1992) found a significant interaction between relationship to target and self-disclosure. Accounting for both self-report and observational data, results suggest that women disclose slightly more than men in intimate relationships.

Results from Dindia and Allen's (1992) meta-analysis do indicate that women disclose more than men yet sex differences are small and are moderated by the sex of the recipient. This led Dindia and Allen (1992) to conclude that sex is not a "stable individual difference variable that consistently predicts level of self-disclosure across sex of partner" (p. 158).

Jourard (1959) stimulated interest in the relationship between self-disclosure and liking when he found a positive relation between self-report measures of self-disclosure to and liking for a partner. Since this first study, three questions have been asked with regard to liking and self-disclosure: (a) does an individual's self-disclosure to a partner lead to the partner's liking of that individual? (b) does liking another person lead to disclosure to that person? and (c) does disclosure to another individual lead to liking for

that person (Dindia, 2002)? Collins and Miller (1994) conducted meta-analyses on these three potential relationships.

The first question of whether or not self-disclosure lead's to liking from the partner has generated the greatest amount of research interest. Collins and Miller (1994) examined 94 studies testing this effect. Support was established for higher levels of disclosure leading to greater liking for the discloser. However, as was the case with sex differences and self-disclosure, the effect size was small leading Collins and Miller to test several potential moderator variables (method of study, type of study, sex of disclosure and recipient, level of disclosure and whether or not the self-disclosure was perceived as personalistic).

Collins and Miller (1994) separated the research into correlational studies and experimental studies to test whether choice of method moderated the relation between self-disclosure and liking. Correlational studies, in the form of relationship surveys involving people in ongoing relationships, had the largest effect size for method and type of study. Experimental studies, especially when in the form of field studies or laboratory based acquaintance studies had a small but still significant effect size. These results provide support for the hypothesis that disclosure causes liking (p. 450). However, field studies that examined disclosure between strangers in a public setting resulted in a significant, negative effect, suggesting that higher levels of disclosure were related to less liking. Collins and Miller (1994) suggest that this negative effect could be the result of an "individual disclosing to a stranger in public, which may be viewed as extremely inappropriate and a violation of social norms" (p. 452).

Similar to Dindia and Allen (1992), Collins and Miller (1994) also tested whether the sex of disclosure, sex of recipient, and the interaction of sex of disclosure and sex of recipient moderated the disclosure-liking relationship. They also found the disclosure-liking relationship to be stronger for female than male disclosures, while the effect size for male disclosures did not differ significantly from zero. However, Collins and Miller (1994) were quick to point out that the "results for both groups were heterogeneous, indicating that sex of disclosure, by itself, does not moderate the disclosure-liking relation" (p. 455). Thus no conclusions could be drawn about the interaction effect of sex of disclosure and sex of recipient.

Finally, Collins and Miller (1994) examined level of disclosure and whether or not the disclosure was personalistic (revealed only to the disclosee) as potential moderators of the disclosure-liking relations. The findings for level of disclosure did not indicate that higher disclosure, relative to low disclosure, leads to less liking. However, the authors were cautious about this result in that it was based on only seven studies. Whether or not the disclosure was personalistic or nonpersonalistic (revealed to many people) resulted in nonstatistically significant results. However, Collins and Miller (1994) pointed out that while not statistically significant, the results were in the predicted direction. This outcome led them to conclude that the relationship between disclosure and liking may be stronger if the recipient believes that the disclosure was given because of something unique or special about them.

Collins and Miller (1994), also conducted a meta-analysis based on their second question, does liking lead to disclosure? Similar to the first question, greater effect sizes were found for correlational studies with small yet significant results for experimental

studies; liking causes disclosure. The only moderator variable that could be tested for the liking-disclosure relation was sex of disclosure. Results provided little evidence that men and women differ in their tendency to disclose to people they like. That is, while men and women may differ slightly in their overall levels of disclosure, their tendency to disclose to people they like did not result in a statistically significant difference.

Finally, Collins and Miller's (1994) meta-analysis focused on whether or not liking of others increased as a result of disclosing to them. Results indicated a small but positive effect size for disclosure and subsequent liking for the receiver. Therefore, Collins and Miller's (1994) meta-analysis of disclosure and liking suggests support for the hypothesis that we like people who self-disclose to us, we disclose more to people we like and we like others as a result of having disclosed to them. With self-disclosure being consistently correlated to positive feelings of liking, it is easy to see why so much emphasis has been placed on self-disclosure as a key element to relationship development.

Another concept of interest which dominates the self-disclosure literature is reciprocity. Dindia and Allen (1995) conducted a meta-analysis of 67 studies involving 5,173 participants on reciprocity of self-disclosure. Similar to the two previous meta-analysis', a moderately large effect size was found but again without being homogenous. Therefore, methods of testing reciprocity (Experimental studies, Correlational studies, Sequential analysis or Social Relations analysis) and measure of self-disclosure were analyzed to determine their moderating effects on reciprocity of self-disclosure.

Of the 67 studies included in this meta-analysis, the majority were experimental. These experiments tested whether an experimenter's or confederate's self-disclosure

(both high and low levels of disclosure) has a positive effect on a participant's self-disclosure. Results of these studies provided evidence of only a one-way effect (A's self-disclosure causes B's self-disclosure). However, "mutual positive influence—A's self-disclosure causes B's self-disclosure and B's self-disclosure causes A's self-disclosure" (p. 176) could not be supported. Therefore, Dindia and Allen (1995) conclude that the results do not provide evidence of reciprocity.

Examination of correlational studies, in the form of laboratory observations of self-disclosure or self-report data, resulted in a significant positive correlation and the authors interpreted this finding as support for reciprocity of self-disclosure. However, Dindia and Allen (1995) point out "a criticism leveled against using the correlation between partners' self-disclosure as a test of reciprocity is that it confuses base rates of self-disclosure with reciprocity of self-disclosure" (Dindia, 2002). This is not a problem in experimental studies where assignment of self-disclosure partners is random. Because correlational studies are observing partner's self-disclosure behavior or obtaining self-report data on a participant's self-disclosure with family or friends what may be reported is self-disclosure due to similar personality traits rather than reciprocity.

A different problem arises when sequential analysis is used to test reciprocity of self-disclosure. Dindia and Allen (1995) examined only five studies where sequential analysis was used to examine reciprocity of self-disclosure. What became apparent is that while one person's self-disclosure may have a positive impact on their partner's self-disclosure, the partner may reciprocate at a later time. Therefore, reciprocity may not occur in the confines of a single speech act or even within the same conversation.

When examining studies using social relations methods, Dindia and Allen (1995) again coded these methods into experimental studies, correlational studies, sequential analysis studies or social relations analysis based on dyadic reciprocity (i.e. self-disclosure that is unique to the particular relationship, controlling for individual differences) (Dindia, 2002). Results from this segment of the meta-analysis suggested experimental studies had a moderate but not homogenous effect. Correlation studies resulted in a very large but not homogenous effect while sequential analysis results produced a small but also no homogenous effect size. However, the effect size for studies employing social relations analysis was very large and homogenous. In summary, Dindia and Allen (1995) concluded that how reciprocity of self-disclosure is tested moderates reciprocity of self-disclosure.

The knowledge gained from these three meta-analyses indicates that the importance placed on self-disclosure in the early interpersonal communication and personal relationships literature was not unfounded. Results suggest self-disclosure is an important variable in the process of relationship development and maintenance. According to Dindia (2002):

> Self-disclosure is reciprocal for both strangers and intimates. Self-disclosure causes liking, and vice versa, and this appears to be true for both strangers and intimates. Although women disclose slightly more than men, and the disclosure-liking relation appears to be slightly stronger for female than male disclosures, in general, it appears that the process of self-disclosure is more similar than different for men and women. (p. 171)

The existence of these three meta-analyses also supports the perception that self-disclosure was originally thought to be the equivalent of effective communication and paramount to the development of close relationships. Altman and Taylor (1973) suggested that as a relationship develops, self-disclosure is a means to enhance the level

of relational closeness. Wheeless and Grotz (1977) proposed that trust was a key component in an emergent relationship and levels of self-disclosure depended heavily on the established level of trust. Early scholars also found that high levels of self-disclosure correlated with high levels of relational solidarity (Wheeless, 1976). Monsour (1992) found that respondents consistently identified self-disclosure to be the most important component defining intimacy in same- and cross-sex friendships. Similarly, Parks and Floyd (1996) reported that self-disclosure was the most common feature in defining friendship closeness (regardless of sex composition).

In addition to relationship development, past research has identified other positive functions of self-disclosure. From a relational perspective of interpersonal communication, messages are not just content or words. Messages also carry a nonverbal or relational component that speaks in conjunction with the text. For example, Derlega, Metts, Petronio and Margulis (1993) suggest telling someone something truly personal about yourself conveys a kind of information beyond the content of the disclosure. It says that you trust that person to "respond appropriately to the revealed information and, in some cases, to keep that information between the two of you" (p. 2). These authors further suggest that another purpose of self-disclosure (in addition to the goal of relationship development) is social validation, getting feedback from others about our thoughts or feelings or getting help with problems in our lives; or we may use self-disclosure for social control, selectively presenting information about ourselves to create a good impression (p. 3). Although early scholarship suggested that individuals exercise control over what and to whom they disclose, the crux of early research has a predominately positive focus.

Beginning in the late 1970s and early 1980s the presumption that "more communication is better" started to be challenged (Golish, 2000). The primarily positive focus of early self-disclosure research was later criticized as the "ideology of intimacy" (Bochner, 1982). Scholars argued that too much emphasis was being placed on how self-disclosure positively impacts relationship development. Parks (1982) and Bochner (1982) argued that the study of relationships had an ideological bias that viewed openness and self-disclosure as integral aspects of relationship development. Considered to be missing from the research until recently, was an examination of how secrets, privacy, and discretion affect the development of interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, these scholars cautioned against the unconditional adoption of such an ideological stance and pointed out instances in which openness could be harmful to relationships.

Despite the benefits of self-disclosure, individuals incur risks in sharing upsetting, personal or taboo experiences with others. The disclosure of negative feelings or personal information may at least temporarily generate discomfort in the speaker and cause the listener to feel upset and embarrassed. Another risk is that if negative feelings are aroused in the listener, the discloser may experience rejection (Derlega et al., 1993, p. 111). Subsequently, relationship well-being may require that individuals balance both candor and discretion in their disclosures to one another (Baxter & Montgomery, 1998; Montgomery, 1993), whether in a romantic relationship, friendship, or family (Golish, 2000, p. 140).

Because the disclosure of personal information may create risks (e.g., being rejected by the disclosure recipient or having the information divulged to third parties), researchers began looking at how individuals seek to maintain privacy by controlling the

amount and kind of information they disclose, as well as by restricting the range of persons to whom sensitive information is revealed (Derlega et al., 1993, p. 6). People do not indiscriminately reveal private information because doing so would make them feel too vulnerable (Petronio, 2002). People more than likely calculate how much they want to tell, when they want to tell, and who they want to tell for the very reason that the information is risky (Greene, Derlega, Yep, & Petronio, 2003). Research on issues such as information control (Afifi & Burgoon, 1998; Vangelisti & Caughlin, 1997), and privacy management (Petronio, 2002) began to surface.

In an effort to address this "ideology of intimacy," provide structure to the self-disclosure research, and provide a conceptual idea of disclosure, Petronio (2004) introduced the theory of communication privacy management. Prior to the theories formal inception, Petronio and Martin (1986) focused on extending the gender based self-disclosure research. This article (published in 1986) predates the formal CPM theory but focuses on extending the gender based self-disclosure research. Their study relies on the research of Altman (1975) and Derlega and Chaikin (1977) who originally studied self-disclosure using the concepts of privacy and interpersonal boundary regulation. As discussed in the research perspective of the current study, these concepts later became central elements of communication privacy management theory.

Petronio and Martin (1986) used the concepts of privacy and interpersonal boundary regulation in order to examine an alternate explanation of why women disclose more than men do. Previous explanations attributed this phenomenon broadly to socialization (i.e., women are socialized to be more open while men are taught to conceal and be less expressive). Their study offered an alternate proposal; men and women are

taught to use different criteria when making their disclosure decisions. For example, this research showed that men anticipated more negative ramifications when disclosing about things they would like to achieve than did women. Overall, "results suggest that men predicted more negative ramifications for all topics than did women (occurrence of vulnerability, feelings of being uncomfortable, exposed weakness, and the possibility of rejection) (p. 504). Conversely, the findings indicated that women tended to predict more positive ramifications from self-disclosure than do men. Petronio and Martin argue this phenomenon could result from women being encouraged and rewarded for expressive behavior from an early age, whereas men are taught to "maintain control over their feelings … and over private information" (p. 504). Results further indicate that topic has an impact on the prediction of positive and negative ramifications for both men and women. For example, when the topic was "global" or nonspecific, respondents tended to predict a positive outcome of self-disclosure. However, "Individuals judged that negative outcome would result most frequently from revealing private information about sexual issues and least frequently from disclosing information about achievement" (p. 505). Petronio and Martin (1986) conclude, "Men and women differ in their disclosure behavior in part because they use differential criteria to judge whether to reveal private information" (p. 505).

As a predecessor to the formal communication privacy management theory, Petronio and Martin's (1986) study represents one of the first discussions of how individuals selectively reveal and conceal personal information as a means of exercising control over the perceived risks. This shift in the ideology of self-disclosure was particularly relevant to the study of how people communicate about sex. As discussed

earlier, topics related to sex and sexuality are among the most taboo and are avoided in American culture. The next section reviews how communication about sex has been studied in interpersonal communication.

Parent to Child Communication Regarding Sex

Awareness that certain topics are dangerous or off-limits is often developed at an early age. Initial interactions with parents and family members have an impact on a child's willingness to discuss or disclose information regarding sex or sexuality. Research has shown that attitudes about sexuality are initially developed through interactions with parents and family members (Christopher, 2001; Warren, 1995). Later, what a child learns from these relationships affects their willingness to discuss topics of a sexual nature with others. The majority of research suggests that parent-child communication regarding sex is either avoided, uncomfortable, or glossed over by the use of inaccurate information. A classic example of this notion is the common practice of teaching children to identify their eyes, ears, nose and mouth (among other non-controversial body parts) by name. However, reproductive organs are less likely to be referred to by their proper names and are frequently given slang, euphemistic terms. Gartrell and Mosbacher (1984) conducted a study asking college students, physicians, and mental health professionals what their parents had told them about their genitals during childhood. Results indicated that 40% of males and 29% of females learned the correct names for male genitals, but only 18% of males and 6% of females learned accurate names for female genitals. Furthermore, those who did not learn the correct names learned either no names or euphemisms for the genitals. Euphemisms for vagina included "Christmas," "pocketbook," and "Virginia" compared with the penis euphemisms of "Dick," "Peter,"

and “Tippi.” Many euphemisms for female genitals, such as “shame” and “nasty” convey negative sexual evaluations of female sex organs. This practice conveys a message that words and body parts related to sex are taboo and to be avoided or covered up. Additionally, males, on the average, had a complete vocabulary for their genitals by age 11.5, but females did not learn a complete vocabulary for theirs until the approximate age of 16. Gartrell and Mosbacher (1984) argue that words are important components of human thought and understanding, and having a name for the penis helps boys think, talk, ask, and learn about their sexuality. However, assigning negative words to female, reproductive organs perpetuates the idea that anything related to sex is taboo, private and to be communicatively avoided. Fewer girls than boys have the names needed to ponder, question, and learn about their genitals and sexuality. Arguably keeping girls in the dark about sex and sexuality for an additional 4 years, during an important phase of sexual development when children are eager and quick learners, further handicaps their ability to communicate with others about sex.

As children get older it becomes more difficult for parents to avoid or misrepresent discussions regarding sex. The need to have sexuality questions answered becomes a real issue for women around the end of puberty and the advent of menstruation. Anecdotal evidence collected from clinic assistants at Planned Parenthood describes a number of patients discussing the day that feminine hygiene products magically appeared in their bedrooms without any kind of open discussion between parents and daughters (R. Heaton, personal communication, 2002-2004). This is one more way children get the impression that sexuality issues are not to be discussed with parents. Unfortunately, when women did report discussing sexual issues with their

mothers, Brock and Jennings (1993) found that memories of their mother-daughter exchanges about sex were primarily negative, “revolving around rules and warnings…” (Warren, 1995, p. 182). Consequently, "this parental orientation contributes to children developing an understanding of sexuality that is permeated with a sense that it is forbidden, mysterious, and conceivably rewarding” often promoting large-scale ignorance and misconceptions about sexual issues for the child (Christopher, 2001, p. 17). This orientation also has the effect of encouraging children to avoid discussing sex with their parents during adolescence; a time when open discussion is critical. Relevant to the current study is the notion that this is a period of time when parents and children are working out privacy boundaries and establishing rules for self-disclosure.

Unfortunately, verbal discussions are not the only way that the taboo nature of communication about sex is perpetuated. Parents also convey their apprehension about discussing sex through nonverbal and indirect communication channels.

Nonverbal and Indirect Communication about Sex

Children’s perceptions of sex communication are not only influenced by the verbal and physical reactions of their parents but by their nonverbal behaviors as well as their indirect discussions of sexual issues. For example, Christopher (2001) suggests:

> Parents in our society seem to be unaware that children learn about sexuality through different types of experiences. Children are just as receptive to nonverbal signals of discomfort and unease as they are to verbal signals of evasion. Hence, although parents may congratulate themselves about getting out of a ‘sticky’ conversation about some sexual issue, the child correspondingly learns that certain life experiences are either not spoken about, or are linked with uncomfortable feelings. (p. 15)

Furthermore, children often observe their parent's nonverbal reactions to sexually explicit material in popular culture. The tone of that reaction leaves a lasting impression on children's perceptions of sexuality issues.

Similarly, parents indirectly convey information about their sexuality values and norms, to their children, in the way they assign meaning to "a neighborhood girl who is premaritaly pregnant, the cousin who marries after beginning a promising career, or the school acquaintance who has a reputation for enjoying a range of coital partners" (Christopher, 2001, p. 63). Without directly addressing their children about sexuality, parents are assigning meaning (whether positive or more often negative) to the above scenarios. Finally, Christopher (2001) suggests that if parents wait for children's questions about sexual issues, while initiating discussion about other important life matters, children may eventually believe that parents do not want to talk about sexual matters. Again, this affects the child's willingness to approach their parents with questions or concerns about sexual issues in the future.

Nonverbal or indirect communication events shape children's perceptions of sex communication and establish unwritten rules about what can and cannot be discussed within the family. Research has also shown that "Such family conversation rules are learned through repetition and most likely provide a powerful context for children's understanding of their own sexuality" (Christopher, 2001, p. 15). Although researchers have yet to examine this issue, "these rules possibly limit the degree of influence parents have later in their children's development when adolescents begin engaging in sexual activity that carries a much greater risk of severe lifelong consequences" (Christopher, 2001, p. 15). This means that when children become teenagers, and are more likely to be

faced with decisions regarding sexuality, they have already learned that they can not go to their parents for advice, guidance or help. Furthermore, it is reasonable to assume that the "rules" children learn for sex communication will follow them into adulthood impacting their ability and willingness to engage in sex communication with potential partners.

Avoidance of Sex Communication

While keeping the focus on sex communication, Guerrero and Afifi (1995) examined this issue from the perspective of topic avoidance and social appropriateness norms. The subject of topic avoidance has been identified as distinct from the concept of secrets in that "secrets imply the hiding of information from others, whereas avoided topics may be fully known by others (Baxter & Wilmot, 1985; Guerrero & Afifi, 1995). This distinction is an important one given the understanding that parents may actively avoid discussing sexual matters with their children and later vice versa. Baldwin and Baldwin (1997) provide the following narrative that powerfully illustrates the danger of sex communication topic avoidance.

> I was not given any information about menstruation. So when I was 14 and began having menstrual cramps, I believed that I had contracted venereal disease, which I had read about in the advice column of a magazine. I believed that I must have contracted the disease through being kissed by a boy at a Christmas party. I wrote to the problem page and was advised to visit my doctor, but I could not consult an elderly gentleman, who knew my family, about something I was so ashamed of. Later, when I had monthly bleeding, I resigned myself to the belief that the disease had reached an incurable stage. (p. 204)

Guerrero and Afifi (1995) identified that social appropriateness norms are likely to be related to family and societal roles and have an impact on which parent a child may seek out to discuss issues related to sex. Of the topics explored by Guerrero and Afifi (1995), sexual experiences were the topic avoided most often. In fact, "means indicated that

young adult daughters ‘almost always’ avoid discussing this topic with their fathers, whereas young adult sons avoid discussing their sexual experiences with their mothers ‘very frequently’” (p. 244). When the topic of sexual experiences was analyzed separately, there was a communicator gender by target gender interaction. As hypothesized, “more topic avoidance was directed at opposite- rather than same-sex parents” (p. 244). For example,

> The idea that sons go to their fathers to discuss issues related to sex, whereas daughters go to their mothers, not only demonstrates a need to approach the parent who is most likely to understand and empathize with one’s concerns, but also conforms to societal norms about who to seek out for such discussion. (Guerrero & Afifi, 1995, p. 224)

However, “topic avoidance was generally high on this topic, regardless of which parent children referenced” (Guerrero & Afifi, 1995, p. 233). Therefore, the relational roles that both the communicator (in this case, the child) and the target (in this case, the parent) play influence what types of topics are socially appropriate to discuss (Guerrero & Afifi, 1995, p. 221).

Communication About Sex Among Peers

As previously discussed, individuals initially develop their attitudes about discussing sex from the interactions with their parents and family members (Christopher, 2001; Warren, 1995). It is reasonable to assume that the nature of these interactions will not only establish rules and attitudes for discussing sexuality within the family, but that individuals will carry these constraints with them into other interpersonal relationships.

Although the research is very clear in pointing out that initial attitudes about sex come from our family relationships, there is research to suggest that much of the actual information we learn about sex comes from our peers, especially as teenagers. In 2002,

The Kaiser Family Foundation conducted a national random-sample survey of 1,854 adolescents and young adults. The results of this study concluded that 76% of participants get most of their sexual health information from friends. Additionally, Aaron and Jenkins (2002) recruited approximately 90 African-American and Latino adolescents from areas in Washington D.C. that report high teen pregnancy rates. When asked to describe where they received sexuality information, most of the African-American female participants said they look to their friends or close female relatives to answer questions about sexual health and intercourse. Furthermore, Latino participants expressed disappointment in their parents/caregivers being unavailable to discuss sex and sexual health due to "strict rules, cultural taboos, or a heavy work schedule" (p. 27). When parents/caregivers were questioned about this particular issue, caregivers corroborated the young adult's claims, admitting that they "avoided talking about intercourse and sexual health due to fear, religious tenets, or lack of time" (p. 27). This study clearly illustrates that while teens may want to talk to their parents about sex, they have learned not to approach them but instead to rely on their peers for information.

Consequently, friendship is another key interpersonal relationship where individuals may or may not choose to discuss sexuality. Although there is no research that directly studies sex communication among friends, an argument can be made that research regarding self-disclosure and self-disclosure avoidance can be helpful when attempting to understand the structure and function of sex communication in interpersonal relationships. It is reasonable to assume that as teens become interested in dating and romantic relationships the topic of sexuality will appear in conversation and

research shows that teens are choosing to talk to their friends over their parents about sexuality (Hacker, 2000; Haffner, 2001; Whitaker & Miller, 2000).

Self-Disclosure and Communication About Sex

A tremendous amount of research has focused on self-disclosure as a key element in friendship initiation and maintenance. Monsour (1992) found that respondents consistently identified self-disclosure to be the most important component defining intimacy in their same- and cross-sex friendships. Similarly, Parks and Floyd (1996) reported that self-disclosure was also the most common feature in defining friendship closeness (regardless of sex composition). However, as noted earlier, in the early 1980's scholarship began to focus on the possibility that topic avoidance may be as critical in defining friendship as research has always shown self-disclosure to be (Parks & Bochner, 1982). Furthermore, scholars began to caution against the unconditional adoption of such an ideological stance and pointed out instances in which openness could be harmful to relationships.

Scholars have argued that this "ideology of openness" does not account for the dialectical nature of relational behavior, nor does it reflect relational member's need for privacy (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996). Afifi and Guerrero (1998) suggest, "Given the diverse nature of friendships and their variability along dimensions of intimacy and closeness, the degree of topic avoidance may be critical to the definition of these relationships (p. 232). Baxter and Wilmot (1985) found that 97% of their samples were able to report a topic they avoided discussing with their opposite-sex friend or dating partner. The most common reason given for topic avoidance was the potential for negative relational consequences resulting from disclosure. A decade later, Afifi and

Guerrero (1995) identified four general reasons for topic avoidance: 1) self protection, including an interest in wanting to avoid criticism and/or avoid the vulnerability that comes with openness; 2) relationship protection, which includes the desire to avoid conflict or partner anger and/or to avoid relations destruction; 3) partner unresponsiveness, characterized by a feeling that the partner will be unable or unwilling to provide the necessary advice or support; and 4) social inappropriateness, involving the perception that disclosure would be socially unacceptable. Results of this study suggest that self-presentation is the primary motivator underlying topic avoidance in friendships. These findings suggest that an individual will avoid disclosing personal information to their friends if they believe that information will damage their image in the eyes of the confidant.

Similarly, in the early 1980s William Rawlins performed several studies examining how the dialectic of expressiveness and protectiveness plays out in friendships. Subject responses indicated that "…unchecked expressiveness was rare due to fear of unanticipated consequences" (Rawlins, 1983, pp. 4-5). Rawlins' participants collectively identified four areas they were hesitant to discuss with their friends. These areas included 1) topics that would hurt the other party's feelings, 2) topics that were "touchy" for the other party, 3) past experiences that one would prefer not reliving, and 4) topics that would jeopardize the other party's opinion of oneself (Rawlins, 1983). Respondents believed that self-disclosure led to greater vulnerability, which in turn produced a need for increased protectiveness of the self and other. Friends protect themselves by being selective in the information they choose to disclose. They protect their friends by keeping confidences and by not approaching topics about which the other

is sensitive. Although Rawlins (1983) does not specifically use the phrase "taboo" his respondents hesitancy to address the areas of conversation listed above, signifies them as "off limits" or "taboo." Individual perceptions as to the social appropriateness of sex communication may or may not encourage friends to avoid this topic.

Romantic Interaction and Self-Disclosure About Sex

The ability or inability to engage in communication about sex is perhaps nowhere more important than in the confines of a romantic relationship. Romantic relationships do not differ from other interpersonal relationships in that they also engage in self-disclosure and self-disclosure avoidance as a way of maintaining the relationship. However, the nature of romantic relationships adds an element of risk to topic avoidance that is not necessarily an issue in family relationships or friendships. Research has established that sex communication is difficult in a variety of relationships. But unlike other relationships topic avoidance in romantic relationships can be a direct factor in unintended pregnancy or the transmission of sexually transmitted infections (Lucchetti, 1999). The taboo nature of sex communication comes into conflict with the need to practice safer sex.

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) remain a major public health challenge in the United States. In 2008, Centers for Disease Control estimated that there were approximately 19 million new STD infections, almost half of them among young people 15 to 24 years of age. The cost of STDs to the U.S. health care system is estimated to be as much as $15.9 billion annually making this a valid public and relational concern. Public health campaigns designed to combat this statistic have advised sexually active individuals to "get to know your partner" through the disclosure of sexual histories (Surgeon General, 1986). The idea behind this campaign was to encourage partners to

assess one another's infection risk therefore allowing them to make protective choices (Lucchetti, 2000). The paradox here is that by asking sexual partners to discuss their sexual histories prior to becoming sexually intimate, health officials were asking these individuals to discuss a taboo topic. Cline, Freeman and Johnson (1990) suggest that "efforts to ensure partner's physical health may function to endanger their relational health" (p. 805). Thus the safer sex practice of disclosing one's sexual risk history to a relational partner may be considered a dialectical phenomenon (Lucchetti, 2000).

Disclosing one's sexual history puts relational partners in a number of relational dilemmas. For example, partners risk being labeled as "easy" or not relationally viable depending on the breadth of their sexual past. So by revealing their sexual history, relational partners may risk losing the current relationship. Furthermore, popular culture perpetuates the idea that sex should be spontaneous and "in the moment." Television, movies and music lyrics are not known for their portrayals of romantic partners disclosing sexual histories or engaging in safer sex. Since teenagers receive a significant amount of sexual information from popular culture, it stands to reason that they would also omit the practice of disclosing sexual history. Finally, American culture views a woman who gets unintentionally pregnant more favorably because she can be defined as having made a mistake, whereas a woman who plans to have sex by taking contraception and exchanging sexual histories is labeled negatively and viewed as immoral. This phenomenon is manifested in Planned Parenthood clinics by the numbers of women who weekly come to the clinic seeking emergency contraception (EC). This form of birth control is specifically designed to be used in the event of "a mistake" or accident. Each time women come in to buy EC they are encouraged to begin a more regular and less

expensive form of birth control. However, many women answer the same way from week to week, "this won't happen again" (R. Heaton, personal communication, 2002-2004). As long as women perceive themselves as just making mistakes they are able to maintain the more socially acceptable label of "good girl." Clearly, planning to have sex is a complex and volatile issue involving self-disclosure as well as many social issues. Lucchetti (2001) suggests "by revealing their sexual history to their partners, individuals risk embarrassing themselves and/or harming the developing relationship… (p. 302). Mutual disclosure would "facilitate their partners' risk assessment" (p. 302) but is frequently avoided in order to sidestep the many potential risks associated with disclosure.

Taboo Topics and Communication about Sex

Baxter and Wilmot (1985) provide one of the very first research articles which specifically examines the issue of "taboo topics in close relationships" as a form of information control. They define a "taboo topic" as an "interaction topic that is perceived as 'off limits' to one or both of the relationship parties" (p. 254). Furthermore, they contend that a taboo topic may or may not involve disclosure about the self. It could also involve information areas "external to the self, the other party or the relationship" (p. 254). Of the six categories identified as relationally taboo by Baxter and Wilmot (1985), two are particularly relevant to the current study. The second most common set of responses were categorized as "extra relationship activity" and dealt with relationships and activities occurring outside of the primary relationship while the fourth taboo topic category involved discussions of "prior relationships" with members of the opposite sex.

As the respondents identified the taboo topics in their relationship, they were asked to elaborate on why these particular topics were best avoided. Relevant to the

current study is a common answer given under the heading of "relationship norms." Of the participants who mentioned relationship norms, 32% of them identified sexual behavior as a taboo topic because they found it embarrassing. One male respondent indicated,

> Birth control is a taboo topic. I get really nervous talking about things like that. At first it wasn't and then after we had talked about it, it was. It was easy to talk about at first because it was less personal then; now though, it would be in terms of our relationship and it is really uncomfortable. (Baxter & Wilmot, 1985, p. 263)

This quote illustrates that issues regarding human sexuality may be difficult to discuss at the interpersonal level. Although Baxter and Wilmot (1985) did not spend a great deal of time on the subject of sexuality, research results support the idea that sex is a taboo topic and has an extensive impact on whether or not romantic partners choose to discuss the issue. By avoiding a discussion of potentially hurtful information about previous sexual experiences prior to becoming sexually involved, intimate partners privilege their relationship over health concerns (Lucchetti, 2000).

The previous literature review has firmly established that self-disclosure of taboo topics is a complex and often avoided phenomenon. Furthermore, this summary supports the idea that topics related to sex and sexuality are clearly taboo in a variety of relationships. While early academic focus on the positive aspects of self-disclosure was statistically justified, it was not inclusive of all the complex variables that come into play when an individual chooses to confide in another person. As reported by Baxter and Montgomery (1998) and Montgomery (1993), relational partners seek balance between openness and privacy. By studying how relational partners manage the dialectical nature of self-disclosure, research gains a broader picture of this complex process and how the

disclosure of a taboo topic gets managed. Communication Privacy Management provides an excellent theoretical framework with which to examine the process by which individuals make decisions about disclosing a taboo topic.

Since its inception (primarily in the realm of interpersonal communication), CPM has been used to examine privacy management and disclosure in four primary contexts. First, technological advances in the last 20 years have opened new venues for communication but also opened up new issues regarding the management of privacy boundaries. Secondly, the medical field with all of its issues of confidentiality and privacy has proven an ideal yet essentially untapped area for research grounded in CPM. Third, CPM has been used to examine how children who suffer sexual abuse decide on a confidant. Finally, CPM established its roots in interpersonal communication and has been widely used to study how the management of privacy and disclosure impacts individuals and their participation in a variety of personal relationships. The following review examines research in each of these contexts.

Technology and Communication Privacy Management

There is a small but growing area of research using CPM to examine how privacy is being managed in spite of technological advances, which have made privacy management more difficult. Beginning circa 1998, the phenomenon of a "weblog" appeared on the internet. Early versions of "blogging" included links to little known areas on the web, commentary, personal thoughts and essays and could only be constructed by individuals who already knew how to create a website (http://www.rebeccablood.net/essays/weblog_history.html). Eventually the technology for blogging became more user friendly though popular applications such as Twitter, and

essentially anyone could now participate in blogging. Today, it is an extremely common practice to share ones thoughts and feelings on the internet. Blogging, as a form of electronic disclosure, invites others to read our thoughts. While many consider their bloggs to be private, frequently bloggs are read by unintended individuals creating boundary turbulence and often resulting in consequences to the author. Child, Pearson, and Petronio (2009) studied how bloggers regulate privacy boundaries to let some people read their thoughts while keeping others out. CPM refers to this phenomenon as managing collective boundaries. "Since blogging entails intentionally inviting others into a private sphere, this study focuses on the collective boundary phenomenon, examining the way bloggers navigate and potentially select ways to regulate their privacy boundaries" (p. 2081). Child et al. (2009) attempted to create a theory-based measure to examine privacy rules employed by college students on their blogs to regulate privacy. Referred to as the blogging privacy management measure (BPMM), this perceptual instrument provides a gauge for examining how college students manage online privacy boundaries primarily occurring through mediated disclosure processes (p. 2090). The authors suggest that this measure and the concomitant CPM theory will aid in understanding college student blogging and their communication with family members. While the applications of this instrument are vast, additional research is necessary to further refine this measure's ability to assess individual differences in blogging privacy management practices. While Child et al. (2009) deviates from face-to-face self-disclosure research by the presence of technology, it is relevant in that it studies how individuals exercise control over their private information albeit by electronic means.

As is true of blogging, e-commerce is another relatively new technological phenomenon involving the management of privacy boundaries on the internet. With identity theft currently being the most common crime in the United States, individuals have growing concerns about how to manage their privacy when using the internet. Metzger (2007) uses CPM theory to address how people manage or cope with privacy concerns in e-commerce transactions. Specific concerns involve "cookies" or electronic surveillance; spam, or when information is sold to other companies or stolen. This article draws similarities between face-to-face privacy management and e-commerce privacy management. For example, CPM suggests that individuals weigh both benefits and risks before disclosing information in relationships. Evidence suggests this to be an issue for online consumers as well. Another consideration, when deciding whether or not to disclose, is a consideration of how the disclosed information will be treated. This relates to online privacy policies. In relationships, individuals will seek information from the relationship partner before making disclosure decisions. E-commerce consumers may seek to read the sites privacy policy before disclosing private information. Metzger (2007) questions how boundary turbulence impacts disclosure decisions in e-commerce contexts and focuses on strategies used by online consumers to manage the risk of disclosure. Specific strategies such as withholding information or lying were examined. Findings demonstrate that "similar kinds of balancing dynamics appear to operate in the Web environment as they do in face-to-face situations, thus extending CPM into the domain of computer mediated communication, and e-commerce relationships" (p. 20). This research also provides insight into factors such as gender, past online and e-commerce experience, concern about online privacy issues, type of information

requested, and the specific language used in retailers' privacy policies that may or may not influence decisions to disclose or withhold information. Metzger (2007) also encourages future research to extend CPM theory's predictions of how boundary turbulence may impact disclosure decisions to e-commerce contexts.

Finally, technological advances have increased employer's ability to monitor the actions of their employees. Allen, Coopman, Hart and Walker (2007) used CPM to examine the tension between employees interest in privacy and employers interests in electronic surveillance. Existing within this tension are CPM issues related to privacy, boundary ownership and boundary turbulence. Allen et al. (2007) sought to understand how employees responded communicatively and attitudinally to electronic surveillance. They hypothesized that employee attitudes would uphold the justifications for surveillance employees received from employers when hired. The authors further hypothesized that employee's reactions to electronic surveillance will differ depending on when they were informed of the surveillance.

The Allen et al. (2007) findings suggest that either, "(a) socialization is effective at setting the privacy boundaries or (b) employees project how they feel about surveillance onto how they said their organizations justified the surveillance" (p. 188). Results suggest that how employees frame the act of surveillance (coercive control or caring) had an impact on the boundary turbulence between employer and employee. Surveillance as "coercive control" often met with resistance from employees while "surveillance as caring" (i.e., monitoring employees to make sure they are not being overworked) was more likely to result in employees opening their privacy boundaries.

This study stands in contrast to other CPM research by studying how people respond to not having control over their privacy management. Boundary negotiation is common in interpersonal relationships however, an imbalance of power between employer and employee make it difficult for employees to participate in the negotiation process, "thereby limiting the degree of boundary turbulence" (p. 190). Individuals may have high expectations of privacy management in their personal lives however, results from the current study suggested that employees have lower expectations of privacy while at work. The risk of losing one's job seems to keep workers from attempting to negotiate privacy boundaries. Allen, Coopman, Hart, and Walker (2007) concluded that widespread boundary turbulence and resistance regarding electronic surveillance does not exist. This study is helpful in pointing out that rules for disclosure, boundary management and privacy protection are contextually based and differ between an individual's personal and professional lives.

The Medical Field and Communication Privacy Management

Another small but burgeoning area of CPM research lies in the medical field. Whether it is doctors struggling with the repercussions of medical mistakes, or care providers attempting to manage their own privacy concerns while at the same time being sensitive to their patient's privacy concerns, the medical field presents a complex and interesting venue for CPM research.

As discussed earlier, self-disclosure is a common coping mechanism for individuals facing a traumatic event. For physicians, a medical mistake can be defined as traumatic with a high emotional force complicated by financial, ethical, and moral ramifications.

Allman (1998) draws on an earlier version of CPM by using the concept of boundary management to examine how physicians cope with a medical error. Allman (1998) points out that the majority of self-disclosure research is housed in the realm of interpersonal relationship development leaving a dearth of research focusing on private information that encompasses more than one person. What happens if the process of boundary management deviates from that of self-information? The focus of her study was to examine how physicians manage self-disclosure amidst boundary constraints imposed by outside forces. While the physician may feel the need to disclose to another person, boundaries are imposed by legal teams that may discourage them confiding in an outsider. Furthermore, the ramifications of disclosure may not stop with the physician alone; it also may entangle the physician's group practice, clinic, hospital and family (p. 175). Research suggests that when it comes to medical errors, physicians are not at liberty to set their own boundaries. This study further identified that "loss of individualism and autonomy" (p. 176) were ramifications of being told not to disclose by outside sources. Physician's choices of whether or not to disclose are embedded in multiple other systems that must also be considered as part of boundary management. Therefore, "the choice for the physician comes down to bearing the burden and living with a mistake known only to self or baring the soul and risking ramifications such as litigation" (p. 176). However, a majority of physicians in the current study reported that they chose to disclose and did so to a significant other. This suggests that physician's facing the ramifications of a medical error may still feel a need to disclose but choose to do so outside of the medical system.

Nine years later, Petronio (2006) picked up this line of research with similar questions and examined the management of privacy boundaries for physicians facing a

medical mistake. Her study supported the notion that several factors come into play when a physician is managing privacy boundaries, and these factors limit whom they can talk to for help. For example, confidentiality laws dictate that the physician keep information about patients private. Unfortunately, disclosing to other physicians may result in negative judgments by a peer, possible humiliation or even legal ramifications. As suggested by Allman (1998), family members are likely to be the safest and most trustworthy confidants but this tends to blur the boundary between work and family life. According to Petronio (2006) "seeking help outside of the family is complicated by looming medical malpractice suits, peer humiliation, and professional damage..." (p. 465). Additionally, when a family member is confided in they are now responsible for protecting the confidentiality of the patient as well as the challenges of being a confidant. Petronio's (2006) study called for more research into the impact of boundary coordination and the family. "We know little about the bearing that providing a support function has on the family" (p. 465). This work adds a new level of complexity to the study of boundary management, the recognition of embedded systems of relationships that bring unique boundary management criteria and concerns for individuals.

In addition to handling their own need to disclose after a medical mistake has occurred, physicians are in the unique situation of possessing private information about other individuals (their patients) and are charged with disclosing (sometime traumatic) news to those in their care. The very nature of being a doctor requires boundary negotiation of private information.

Petronio, Sargent, Andea, Reganis and Cichocki (2004) further examined the issue of family members and disclosure by focusing on the perspective of friends and

family as informal healthcare advocates (IHA). Giving the potential for difficult or traumatic news during a consultation with a doctor, friends and family are often called upon by the patient to accompany them. This article studied the boundary turbulence that can occur when friends and family are asked to accompany patients during physician visits thereby becoming an informal healthcare advocate. The presence of an IHA represents unique privacy challenges often confronting the advocate with numerous privacy dilemmas. Boundary turbulence can present itself in a variety of ways: (1) The advocate reveals information to the doctor that the patient intended to keep private (2) The patient conceals relevant information from the doctor due to the presence of IHA or (3) The doctor may be confused about the role of the IHA and reveal information the patient does not want them to know. Overall, Petronio et al. (2004) suggest that the patients tended to have positive feelings about the advocates involvement. However, IHAs reported sacrificing privacy issues when the patient's health was considered at risk. This finding implicates the CPM concept of co-ownership of information by addressing what happens when information is shared and managed between confidants.

Helft and Petronio (2007) used CPM to describe the dynamics of a common medical situation...the "hit-and-run" delivery of bad news to cancer patients as a means to investigate the "co-ownership" of information. CPM suggests that patients consider doctors to be "stakeholders" or co-owners of the medical information they acquire about patients. "Physicians acquire information that does not properly belong to them, yet both they and their patients co-own the information" (p. 809). As "stakeholders," CPM suggests that patients have certain expectations about how the doctor will treat them and their medical information because the doctor shares the responsibility of caring for and

about the information. Previous research (Vangelisti, Caughlin, & Timmerman, 2001) highlighted that one consideration individuals have when deciding whether or not to disclose personal information is how they believe the interpersonal confidant will treat or handle that information. For many physicians, the weight of delivering bad news to a patient as well as the hectic schedules they maintain may result in the “dumping” of information on a patient or being insensitive or blunt. So called "hit-and-run" deliveries of difficult news violate the implicit rules of co-owned information management. Helft and Petronio (2007) argue that reducing the tendency to commit hit-and-run delivers of bad news is an admirable goal and concluded by recommending courses of action for physicians based on the tenets of communication privacy management theory. For example, they suggest that “When physicians approach patients, they should do so with the knowledge that patients see them as both a partner and a stakeholder in managing their important medical information” (p. 810). Patients do not see physicians as “detached bystanders” but “integral stakeholders” of the information. In this sense, patients have the same expectations of doctors that they have of interpersonal confidants when it comes to managing their personal information. This approach is helpful in keeping the magnitude and the seriousness of the information delivered to the patient in the appropriate perspective.

As discussed earlier, CPM includes aspects of expanding personal boundaries to include other people, relationships, and systems of relationships. When personal health is at stake, the expansion of privacy boundaries can prove problematic. The research reviewed up to this point focused solely on privacy management and self-disclosure with regard to information. Petronio and Kovach (1997) addressed managing privacy in the

later stages of life, which included boundary construction maintenance and maintenance surrounding possessions and territory as well as tangible privacy issues for older adults in care facilities. Their research attempted to uncover “baseline information” that acts as a threshold for institutional staff members to consider the elders' privacy needs as important enough to be considered. "This is the first study in a series that focuses on the nursing staff's awareness of how their own privacy is effected, how they perceive the elders' privacy in the institution, and how they manage both privacy boundaries for themselves and the elders" (p. 118). Unlike other articles grounded in the CPM perspective, this study focused on boundary construction and maintenance around possessions and territory as well as privacy issues involving personal hygiene and dining. Results suggested that if the caregiver is able to manage the interdependent relationships successfully, the elder may feel more in control over his or her environment thereby resulting in better adjustment and fewer health problems for the older adult. Similar to the privacy management issues in interpersonal relationships, the negotiation of privacy boundaries ultimately impacted the formation of relational boundaries between staff and elders, and the relational nature of privacy boundary management between the care staff and elders has important emotional and health implications that warrant future research.

Victims of Sexual Abuse and Communication Privacy Management

The third primary context of CPM research investigates victims of sexual abuse. Researchers are using CPM as a foundation for identifying how victims of sexual abuse decide whom to choose as a confidant. Petronio, Flores and Hecht (1997) examined the disclosure choices of children who have suffered sexual abuse. In the author’s words, "… we examine the necessary criteria for access to take place regarding the confidant or

target" (p. 103). The children in this study identified five categories of confidant characteristics they use to judge whether they should give voice to their disclosure about their sexual abuse. These criteria included credibility, supportiveness, advocacy, strength, and protectiveness. Credibility for abused children included people with personal abuse experience and a certainty that the confidant would respond appropriately. Supportiveness came in the form of signals to the child confirming their confidant was willing to give emotional help and make the child feel comfortable while talking about the abuse. Advocacy, for these abused children, meant choosing an individual who would adequately represent his or her situation and take the necessary actions to end the abuse. "Strategically, selecting confidants means that these children are looking for people who will and can take the information of abuse to others, if necessary, resulting in stopping the abuse" (p. 108). In addition to managing the risk to themselves with regard to disclosure, children in this study based their confidant choices on whether or not they believed certain people could handle the information, that is, the strength of the confidant. Is this potential confidant strong enough to hear the news about their abuse? Protectiveness meant that the confidant shields the children from feeling uncomfortable, guilty, or upset by treating their concerns seriously.

The work of Petronio et al. (1997) illustrates the complexity of making careful confident choices when a taboo topic is involved. “In their careful choices of confidants and their use of decision criteria, these children tell us much more than how they select a confidant. They help us understand the complexities of locating the voice of logic and how that voice becomes a means of resistance” (p. 111). It is reasonable to assume this is true of others attempting to deal with disclosing topics of a taboo nature as well.

Staller and Nelson-Gardell (2005) built on disclosure of sexual abuse research to learn how the entire process of disclosure unfolded for pre-adolescent and adolescent girls. They examined what facilitated and hindered disclosure and what consequences followed from it (p. 1418). This study is a contextual examination of the entire process, closer to the point in time when the abuse and disclosure occurred. Staller and Nelson-Gardell (2005) engaged in textual analysis of focus group data of preadolescent and adolescent girls who had survived sexual abuse. The girls were originally asked to discuss what was helpful to their recovery, but the researchers quickly identified valuable self-disclosure information in the data. Through secondary analysis of 106 segments of discourse, focused solely on disclosure, they were able to construct a map of the disclosure process. Findings were reported as three phases of the disclosure process: 1) the "self" phase provides a previously unaddressed issue where the victim must come to understand what has or is happening to them. 2) the "confidant selection-reaction phase" where the victim makes decisions about whom to tell as well as when and where. It is interesting to note that this study suggests the victim's story may be altered based on the reaction of the confidant. Staller and Nelson-Gardell (2005) point out that disclosure is not a one-way process. “Children receive, process, evaluate, and react to information based on how adults respond to them” (p. 1423). They further argue that negative reactions from the confidant may help to explain why children may recant their stories of abuse. According to Staller and Nelson-Gardell (2005), this phenomenon can be reframed by “wondering why they would stick by an account that jeopardizes their relationships with caregivers” (p.1423). 3) The "Consequences" phase is where victims are forced to deal with a variety of personal and environmental consequences of their disclosure. The

victim stands to face significant losses based on their disclosure. For example, one girl in this study, who had been sexually abused by her father, reported wishing she could "talk to her daddy about the abuse" but when she asked her mother if she could "write him a letter…she said no because he'll tell his lawyer" (p. 1424). This suggests that in addition to dealing with being victimized, some children may also be dealing with grief and loss when family members, etc. are cut off from them.

Staller and Nelson-Gardell (2005) build on previous self-disclosure research by bringing two important elements to light. Their framework draws attention to two areas of self-disclosure that are underdeveloped in previous research. First, recognition of a "pre-disclosure" phase where the individual must come to understand what is happening or has happened to them. While numerous studies focus on the decision making process of to tell or not to tell, very few acknowledge the process of becoming self-aware. Second, this study points out that disclosure is not a one-way process and focuses attention on the reaction of the person being told and the impact that reaction has on additional disclosures. The addition of these two elements to future research will provide greater breadth to the self-disclosure literature. First, an examination of the thought processes an individual goes through before ever disclosing to a confidant would provide additional information about how they are able to process traumatic experiences. Second, following disclosure episodes through to the reaction of the confidant brings disclosure research full circle. The reaction of the confidant determines not only whether or not that particular person will be relied upon again but would also give insight into how the discloser copes with an unanticipated, potentially negative reaction.

Interpersonal Communication and Communication Privacy Management

Interpersonal communication encompasses the largest collection of CPM research. Scholars have relied on this theory to guide research on topic avoidance, parent and adolescence boundary management, as well as communication issues in a variety of immediate and extended family contexts. The study of topic avoidance was among the first departures from the "ideology of intimacy" and addressed the idea that certain personal or conversational topics may be off limits in different relationships. These topics are therefore avoided for the sake of harmony or relationship maintenance. However, some researchers have argued that topic avoidance may prove dissatisfying (Afifi, Joseph & Aldeis, 2008; Caughlin & Afifi, 2004). It is conceivable that having to avoid discussing certain topics in a relationship may ultimately lead to relational partners being unhappy in the relationship.

Caughlin and Afifi (2004) investigated the commonly held belief that avoiding certain topics in relationships is functional and may enhance a relationship. The authors argue that under certain circumstances, topic avoidance can lead to relational dissatisfaction. "Despite theoretical arguments that avoiding certain topics can be functional, there is consistent evidence that avoiding topics tends to be associated with dissatisfying relationships" (p. 479). Topic avoidance is another way of saying an individual has constructed privacy boundaries to control the risk involved with disclosing private information (i.e. if the perceived risk is too great, that topic would be avoided). Caughlin and Afifi's (2004) study examined dating relationships and college student's relationships with their parents, in an attempt to identify moderators of topic avoidance and relational dissatisfaction. They draw on the principles of CPM theory, which suggests

that “the relational impact of topic avoidance will depend on the criteria that undergird decisions regarding privacy regulation" (p. 482).

Caughlin and Afifi (2004) suggest that when relationship protection was the underlying criteria for topic avoidance, the negative association between avoidance and relational satisfaction was diminished (p. 504). On the other hand, if one partner perceived that the topic avoidance was due to a lack of relational closeness, this tended to be associated with heightened dissatisfaction. Interestingly, perceptions of self and another person’s communication competence were found to moderate the extent to which avoidance was associated with dissatisfaction. For example, girlfriends, children, and parents, perceptions of their counterpart’s communication competence lessened the typically negative association between their own avoidance and relational satisfaction. Individuals may be afraid to raise controversial topics if they perceive themselves or their counterpart as lacking the communication competence to successfully handle the conversation (p. 485). Consequently, “This suggests that one condition under which topic avoidance in not particularly dissatisfying is when the avoidance occurs despite believing that the other person could talk about the topic competently if it were introduced” (Caughlin & Afifi, 2004, p. 505). The authors recommend another avenue for future research would be to investigate whether the moderators of the topic avoidance and dissatisfaction vary depending on the specific topic avoided.

Adolescence represents a time in development where teens are attempting to establish privacy boundaries between themselves and their parents (Hawk et al., 2009). CPM provides a foundation for studying the negotiation of such boundaries.

Hawk et al. (2009) used a longitudinal approach to studying the connection between adolescent perceptions of parental privacy invasion and the frequency of conflicts with parents. Adolescence represent a time when teens are acquiring more independence and may want to regulate the amount of access parents have to their private information. Hawk et al. point out that "Privacy invasion experiences can occur when parents claim ownership over information or spaces that adolescents view as their own to control" (p. 511). This results in a need for boundary coordination. Findings suggest adolescents' perceptions of privacy invasion predicted more frequent conflict with parents. Results also showed that adolescent-parent conflicts predict perceptions of invasion. Specifically, “males are more prone to react to conflict episodes in adolescence with privacy invasion attributions” (p. 517).

In spite of the need to establish privacy boundaries as a teen, adolescence is a stage in development when teenagers need to talk with adults about taboo topics such as sexuality. Research strongly suggests that parental communication about sex affects their children’s decisions about putting off sex as well as avoiding risky sexual behavior. Afifi, Joseph, and Aldeis (2008) examined the notion that while most parents feel they should communicate with their children about sex, few actually do. Communication privacy management theory provides a framework for understanding how and why parents and adolescents discuss, or avoid discussing, sensitive topics like sex with one another.

The topic of sex is typically considered private in the United States (Afifi, Caughlin, & Afifi, 2007) and has been found to be the topic that adolescents avoid most with their parents (Guerrero & Afifi, 1995). Afifi et al. (2008) examined this issue by looking at how parents communicate with their adolescent about sex. Specifically the

authors focused on how parental interpersonal skill, perceived communication competence, and parent-child relational quality predict anxiety and avoidance during the discussions about sex. Additionally, the authors wanted to know if the topic of sex itself causes anxiety in teens or whether it is the parent's communication that causes anxiety thereby increasing anxiety. Qualitative analysis suggests there are five factors that influence how parents and teens talk to one another about sex: Religiosity, gender of the child, norms of the child's friends, fear appeals and enmeshment.

Religiosity was a primary theme and surprisingly children and parents who held very conservative religious beliefs and practices appeared to be comfortable talking about sex together. In short, the child's decision to be abstinent made the topic of sex a non-issue for these respondents. Gender of the child was found to shape the tone of the conversation with males being more likely to use "rather startling, dark, humorous remarks…making light of the situation and putting their parent and themselves at ease" (p. 705). On the other hand, female adolescents tended to have more extreme reactions when confronted with discussing sex with their parent. Compared to the male adolescents, females reacted with either "great openness or avoidance" when faced with the topic of sex (p. 706). Sexual attitudes and behaviors of the child's friends also emerged as an important theme in this research. Discussing the adolescent's friends, in some cases, was a way to shift responsibility off of the child having to discuss his or her own attitudes and behaviors and instead discussing his or her friends. In other cases, discussing the child's friends provided points of comparison and contrast between the friends and the child's sexual beliefs and attitudes.

The fourth theme of “fear appeals” to promote abstinence and safer sex behaviors was especially prevalent when the child was male. Parents tended to dominate the conversation and talked to their teen about the negative consequences of sexual activity in an effort to prevent it. In the presence of fear appeals, male adolescents again responded with sarcasm suggesting the attempt to scare them was not taken seriously. Lastly, Afifi et al. (2008) reported a few of the parents and adolescents in their study demonstrated elements of enmeshment or “emotional parentification in which the child and parent assumed a peer-like relationship” (p. 711). These qualitative results "point to the fact that it is not simply the amount of communication about sex that is important, but it is also what is being said and how it is said" (p. 716).

Quantitative results suggest that when parents were receptive, informal and composed during the conversations, their adolescents were less anxious and less avoidant. The teen’s perception of their parent’s communication competence was also predictive of the child's anxiety, thereby influencing avoidance tendencies. These findings support previous research that indicates children tend to talk about sex more with their mothers than their fathers and daughters are more often the focus of discussion than are sons. Afifi et al. (2008) suggest that further research is necessary to compare mothers’ communication characteristics with those of fathers and the interaction of the gender of the parent and the gender of the child on the child and parent’s anxiety and avoidance tendencies.

While all parents and children struggle with privacy boundaries, step or “blended” families represent a unique venue for the study of communication privacy management. Afifi (2003) adopted a CPM perspective to investigate the communication patterns that

perpetuate and deter triangulation (loyalty conflicts that result when a covert coalition is formed, uniting one family member with another against a third person) in stepfamilies. Divorce and remarriage often enhance the complexity of family relationships and the likelihood that triangulation will occur in step-families. CPM is especially relevant in the current study in that "a primary way alliances are negotiated is through redefining boundaries for appropriate disclosure and ownership of information" (p. 730). Afifi (2003) focused on the privacy boundary and the ways in which stepfamilies communicatively manage the coalitional barriers that are created through the regulation of information.

Stepfamilies are particularly interesting because not all former spouses have cooperative post-divorce relationships thereby creating a variety of boundary regulation issues. This can be especially problematic when the children "become mediators for their parents' information, resulting in fears of being caught between them" (p. 730). However, children of divorce are not the only ones who may feel caught between other family members; remarried spouses can also feel caught between their children and stepchildren. Frequently if the stepparent is viewed as an outsider, children may respond by forming an alliance with their original parent against the stepparent. Afifi (2003) suggested that by analyzing the turbulence associated with triangulation and the stepfamilies' response to it; researchers can better understand how to manage the turbulence.

Her results suggest that feelings of being caught between were associated with enmeshed boundaries where too much personal information (inappropriate disclosure) was disclosed about the other parent or circumstances surrounding the divorce. Additionally, children reported feeling "caught in between" when parents used them as

messengers or spies with the other parent. Families who were able to effectively manage their privacy boundaries learned over time it was best to directly confront the person with whom they had a problem. This solution diminished feelings of being 'caught' by both parents and children.

Other methods of reducing triangulation involved communicating a united front as a remarried couple, not talking badly about the other parent and minimizing conversations with uncooperative former spouses. Less successful strategies including avoidance and competitive symmetry were found to lead to greater dissatisfaction with stepfamilies. Overall, Afifi (2003) supported the conclusion that metacommunication, open communication, creating a unified front, and directly confronting issues are paramount to minimizing feelings of being caught.

Remarried or step-families are not the only example of the difficulties that can occur when members of one family join with another family. Although under studied, newlyweds and in-law relationships are complex and deserving of further investigation. Morr Serewicz and Canary (2008) used CPM theory to investigate connections among disclosure, family privacy orientation, and outcomes for in-law and marital relationships (p. 349). Specifically, their study investigated newlyweds' perceptions of private disclosures received from their in-laws and the effect these disclosures had on family relationships. Results suggested "disclosure as signal that the discloser has granted group membership to the receiver appears to be highly significant for these newlyweds as they make the transition to family membership, particularly for disclosures of acceptance and historical identity" (p. 354). Morr Serewicz and Canary (2008) reported that slanderous disclosure had a consistently negative impact on outcomes for the in-law relationship

supporting another CPM claim that privacy and disclosure exist in a dialectic, and both are necessary to any relationship.

The breadth of fields summarized in the previous review indicates that privacy management is not just an interpersonal communication issue. CPM provides a theoretical framework for studying how privacy gets managed in a variety of contexts. Theoretical underpinnings such as boundary permeability and coordination allow scholars to address that while some topics may need to be disclosed for logistic or cathartic reasons, others may be contained within less permeable boundaries. There is value in understanding how individuals decide with whom to coordinate boundaries and who it would be safer to maintain rigid boundaries.

Of particular interest to the current study is how women who have decided to terminate a pregnancy choose a confidant. It has been established that disclosing traumatic information is both logistically and emotionally beneficial. However, given the level of controversy surrounding the issue of abortion, it is safe to assume this is not a topic pregnant women can discuss with just anyone. Therefore, relationships that these women would normally seek out for support and advice may not be available under the circumstances of terminating a pregnancy. Furthermore, there is an added taboo for the women in this study in that involves the element of choice. Arguably, other taboo topics while equally traumatic, do not involve individual choice (i.e., HIV status, medical mistakes, etc.). Exercising a woman's right to choose is a critical element in this controversy as well as the basis for much of society demonizing women who choose to terminate. Therefore, when the women in this study determined that they were facing an unwanted pregnancy, whom did they turn to for support or advice? Furthermore, what

aspects of these relationships made them safe for a discussion about seeking an abortion? Conversely, what aspects of the other relationships, they could have chosen, made them undesirable in this situation? Did respondents have previous disclosure experiences that made certain individuals in their lives risky confidants or was their decision based solely on personality characteristics? Answers to the following research questions will significantly contribute to understanding how difficult self-disclosure choices get made. Therefore,

RQ1: When faced with a decision regarding an unintended pregnancy, who do women self-disclose to and why?

RQ2: When faced with a decision regarding an unintended pregnancy, who do women intentionally avoid self-disclosing to and why?

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

To answer the research questions, two distinct research methodologies were employed. First, a qualitative research process was complimented with a quantitative analysis program to investigate the self-disclosure decisions of women who had chosen to terminate a pregnancy. Given the taboo nature of the respondent's choice, a qualitative approach of depth interviews was chosen for the tendency to "take on the form and feel of talk between peers; loose, informal, coequal, interactive, committed, open-ended, and empathic" (Lindlof, 1995, p. 164). Additionally, "A primary purpose of qualitative research is to describe and clarify experience as it is lived and constituted in awareness" (Polkinghorne, 2005, p. 138). According to Cresswell (2007), qualitative methods of research are best used when we need "a complex detailed understanding" of an issue (p. 40). This level of detail can only be established by "talking directly with people, going to their homes or places of work, and allowing them to tell the stories unencumbered by what we expect to find or what we have read in the literature" (p. 40). Most important to the current study is the idea that qualitative research allows us to hear silenced voices. That is, one on one interviews allowed the researcher to establish rapport with the respondents and gain the trust needed to discuss the taboo topic of abortion. Qualitative methods, "empower individuals to share their stories, hear their voices, and minimize the

power relationships that often exist between a researcher and the participants in the study" (p. 40). Given the taboo nature of abortion, this approach provided the best opportunity for respondents to relax and feel safe while discussing their experiences with self-disclosure as it related to their current (most recent) pregnancy. Additionally, the choice was made to bypass classical content analysis procedures and use an artificial neural network software, known as CATPAC to discover the clusters of meaning represented in the interviews. CATPAC has been used for qualitative research across a wide range of disciplines such as policy, business, sociology and forest management (Allen, 2005). A major benefit of this method is that it does not require pre-coding. This allows themes and concepts to emerge from the data and reduces bias in the analysis.

Second, a more traditional, qualitative textual analysis was employed to uncover the rules and conditions of disclosure for each of the clusters identified by CATPAC. This particular approach was useful in obtaining information about why certain individuals were chosen for disclosure while others were ruled out. While CATPAC established the larger clusters of meaning, traditional textual analysis allowed individual reflections from respondents to emerge and greater understanding of the self-disclosure process to unfold.

Selection of Participants

In order to understand participant experiences with self-disclosure and abortion, patients were approached in the recovery room of a local women's clinic and asked if they were willing to participate in a research interview. Sixty women were interviewed for this study. Permission was given by the Utah Women's Clinic to ask for volunteer respondents while patients were recovering after their procedure. Depending on where

these women were in their pregnancy, safety concerns required them to remain in the clinic anywhere from one half hour to all day. During this time patients were approached and asked if they would be willing to participate in a brief interview. Clinic nurses were instrumental in identifying which patients seemed "to want to talk about their experience."

Upon agreeing to be interviewed, each woman was escorted to a private room and read a standardized description of the research project and what would be required of them (see Appendix A). If the woman was still willing to participate, she was then asked to follow along as the researcher read "a permission to be interviewed and to have the interview tape recorded" form (see Appendix B). Upon completion, each respondent was asked if they had any questions and then asked to sign and date the permission form.

Participants

Participants ranged in age from 15 to 40 with a mean age of 23.58, a median age of 23 and the most frequently occurring participant age was 28 years. On average, these women first engaged in sexual intercourse at 16 years of age with the youngest being 12 and the oldest being 21. Of the 60 respondents interviewed, 31 reported being single, never married, while ten were single but currently living with their partner. Additionally, nine respondents were divorced, eight were married and two reported being separated. When ask to describe their "highest grade level or year of school," 5 of the 60 respondents had obtained a graduate degree, 6 were college graduates and 18 of the respondents reported completing some college. Ten respondents were currently in high school, and 16 were high school graduates. Five respondents reported dropping out of high school before graduating.

Respondents were asked an open ended question about their ethnicity. Specifically, "What do you consider your racial or ethnic background?" While the format of this question makes it difficult to categorize respondents across race/ethnicity lines, it allowed for each respondent to self-identify the label with which they were most comfortable. Twenty-two out of the 60 respondents identified as White, while 18 stated they were Caucasian. Eleven respondents identified as Hispanic, Spanish, Mexican or Chicana. The remaining nine respondents reported a variety of racial/ethnic backgrounds including American Indian, Indian, Bosnian, Black and North American.

Additionally, as part of the initial demographic protocol, the participants were asked to disclose how many times they had been pregnant (including the current pregnancy) and how many of those pregnancies had resulted in a live birth. Although the average number of pregnancies was three, more often than not this was the woman's first pregnancy (minimum of one; maximum of seven times pregnant). Of those pregnancies, an average of one had resulted in a live birth (median 1, mode 0, minimum 0, maximum 6). It is important to note here that the current study has no way of determining how many of the prior pregnancies ended in abortion or miscarriage.

Data Collection

Individual interviews took approximately 30 to 45 minutes each to complete. All interviews were conducted by a single researcher and were audio-taped. The interview was chosen for this study in that it is well suited to, "helping the researcher understand a social actor's own perspective" (Burnett, 1991, p. 130). Self-report evidence, as collected through qualitative interviews, is necessary and valuable for inquiry about human experience (Polkinghorne, 2005). However, self-report evidence should not be

misconstrued as “mirrored reflections of experience as they actually occurred in the past” (p. 139). People do not have complete access to their experiences and recollection of events is filtered through a variety of different lenses. Therefore, the respondent’s memories are reconstructions of the past, not simply retrieval (p. 143). Therefore, “The purpose of the exploration of remembered events is not to produce accurate recalls but to provide an occasion for reflection on the meaning these events have for the participant” (Polkinghorne, 2005, p. 143).

According to Polkinghorne (2005), “The purpose of interviews is to produce alternative perspectives on the experience under study” (p. 143) and have a number of benefits when attempting to collect accounts of events in people’s lives. For example, interviews allow a researcher to learn about things that cannot be observed directly (Lindlof, 1995). Specifically, the “respondent interview” was chosen because of its standardized protocol and high content comparability (Lindlof, 1995, pp. 171-172). Furthermore, this style of interview allows the researcher to treat the participants as authoritative speakers on behalf of her own experiences. For these reasons, it is common for a respondent interview to become a type of participant observation project once the interviewer and participants have built up a level of trust (p. 164). Given the sensitive nature of the situation these women were in, it was imperative that the interview method be conversational and supportive, helping them to feel comfortable in discussing their circumstances and life experiences. Questions were open-ended but designed to focus the conversation and keep the participants talking about their self-disclosure experiences.

Interview Protocol

The interview data in this study were collected as part of a larger study being conducted by Planned Parenthood Association of Utah (see Appendix B). The interview protocol began by asking basic demographic questions in order to determine the mean age, level of education, and marital status of participants. Additional questions focused on previous pregnancies, age of first intercourse and contraceptive compliance. These questions provided background information about the participants that will aid in understanding their overall experience regarding unintended pregnancies and relationships.

Questions specifically designed to answer the first research question began by asking "When you realized you were pregnant, whom did you go to first for support or advice?" Once the relationship was identified, a series of probes were used to help direct the conversation but allow the respondent to tell her story. The first question was the same for all of the relationships (i.e. family, friend or partner), "What about your relationship with _____ led you to discuss your pregnancy with him/her?" This probe directly relates to research question one in that it asked them to identify their confidant and discuss why they chose this particular person. Other follow-up probes designed to keep the respondent talking on the issue of self-disclosure asked questions such as, "How did you know that _____ would be helpful/supportive in this situation?" "Have you talked about sexuality issues with _____ prior to becoming pregnant?" etc. Although the initial questions were the same for all interviews, follow-up probes were frequently altered to fit the respondent's situation or nonverbal cues.

In order to answer research question two, the interview protocol then probed with a series of questions designed to encourage the respondents to reflect on those people/relationships they avoided talking to about their decision to terminate a pregnancy. This section of questions was prefaced with the following statement, "Now that we have talked about the people you sought out to discuss your pregnancy, I would like to ask you a couple of questions about people in your life that you chose not to approach for support/advice." The questions in this section were primarily the same as those in the previous section but focused on the respondent's decision not to discuss their pregnancy with certain relationships. For example, under the heading of family, the first probe asked "What about your relationship with your parents or siblings made this topic one that you did not want to discuss with them?" A similar question in the "partner" section asked, "Why do you think you were not comfortable discussing your pregnancy with your partner?" and "Do you think you will ever discuss your decision to terminate this pregnancy with your partner? Why/Why not?" Through the stories respondents told in reference to the predetermined probes, greater insight was gained into the factors that encourage or discourage self-disclosure of taboo topics.

CATPAC Analysis

Verbatim transcripts were made of the interview recordings at a latter date by a professional transcriber. McCracken (1988) makes several suggestions with regard to handling interview data. First of all, he asserts that a professional typist should transcribe the recordings of each interview. According to McCracken (1988), researchers who transcribe their own data, ". . . invite not only frustration but also a familiarity with the data that does not serve the later process of analysis" (pp. 41-42). Furthermore,

McCracken suggests that transcripts should be verbatim records prepared on a word processor so the final product is both a hard copy version and a computer readable file (p. 42). Approximately, 2,000 pages of text were produced from transcription of interview recordings.

Given the large amount of text produced by this study, conventional means of data analysis were in danger of being mismanaged. Krippendorf (1980) argued that in the case of large textual data sets, "unaided, the analyst is likely to form biased, incomplete, and highly selective impressions" (p. 121). Therefore, analysis of the transcribed data was conducted using network text analysis (NTA) software known as the CATPAC system (Terra Research & Computing, 1993). NTA treats words as nodes and connections are observed through the co-occurrence of words within a defined "window" of text. CATPAC is "a self-organizing Artificial Neural Network that has been optimized for reading text" (CATPAC Users Manuel and Tutorial, p. 1). This software is able to identify the most common words in the text and determine patterns of similarity based on their associations in the text. As noted by Bergstrom and Holmes (2000), Carley (1997) emphasized the utility of examining patterns of language use to explore social meaning: "Language as a social chronicle implicitly contains the socially accepted meaning or definition of the various concepts in the social vocabulary" (p. 99). A network text analysis (NTA) is therefore an appropriate analysis tool when looking for patterns in the self-disclosure choices of women who had chosen to terminate a pregnancy.

> CATPAC reads text files and produces a variety of outputs ranging from simple diagnostics (e.g., word and alphabetical frequencies) to a summary of the "main ideas" in a text. It uncovers patterns of word usage and produces such outputs as simple word counts, cluster analysis (with icicle plots), and interactive neural cluster analysis (http://www.terraresearch.com/).

This software has the ability to identify frequently occurring unique words in a text as well as determine the "clustering of word co-occurrence (that is, the words that appear frequently with each other)" (Sherblom, Reinsch, Jr. & Beswick, 2001, p. 40). CATPAC displays the results of the analysis textually, through the generation of a list (see Tables 1 and 2) and visually through dendograms. The program reads through the text and identifies when specific words occur together. According to Bergstrom and Holmes (2000), "The words themselves reflect the fundamental concerns of respondents in the interviews" (p. 387). In this study, the words reflect the risks respondents took into account before choosing to disclose her situation to another individual. Additionally, "Word frequencies identify important topical subdomains" of the conditions for disclosure or nondisclosure, "but not how the terms relate to each other" (p. 387). The patterns of how words co-occur can then be analyzed to reveal themes of conditions of disclosure. "Words that occur close to each other are likely to be conceptually linked" (Bergstrom & Holmes, 2000, p. 388). Therefore, preconceived categories and test for intercoder reliability are unnecessary.

From this information, the researcher is able to identify themes and main concepts dealt with in the text. Bergstrom and Holmes (1999) and Carmichael and Sherblom, Reinsch Jr. and Beswick (2001) agree that patterns in the data should be allowed to emerge from the text rather than imposing an a priori category system. Once patterns of language use are extracted, this analysis enables researchers "to draw theoretical links between the use of words and the mental states or cognitions they represent" (Sherblom, Reinsch, & Beswick, 1995, p. 40). Using this information, the researcher is then able to

Table 1
Thirty-Eight Most Frequently Occurring Content Bearing Words
for Research Question One

Word	*Frequency*	*Percent*	*Word*	*Frequency*	*Percent*
I	344	25.2	Comfortable	17	1.2
Mom	111	8.1	Anything	16	1.2
Boyfriend	103	7.5	Everything	16	1.2
Me	97	7.1	Good	16	1.2
Girlfriend	86	6.3	Close	15	1.1
Talk	55	4.0	Baby	13	1.0
Told	39	2.9	Person	12	0.9
Sister	35	2.6	Things	12	0.9
Friend	30	2.2	Right	11	0.8
Partner	29	2.1	Time	11	0.8
Don’t	28	2.0	Aunt	10	0.7
Pregnant	28	2.0	Exhusband	10	0.7
Feel	27	2.0	Kids	10	0.7
Think	27	2.0	Parents	10	0.7
Bestfriend	25	1.8	Decision	8	0.6
Grandmother	24	1.8	First	8	0.6
Support	22	1.6	Matter	8	0.6
Abortion	19	1.4	Relationship	8	0.6
Husband	18	1.3	Together	8	0.6

Note. Total words = 1366. Total unique words = 38

Table 2
Thirty-Eight Most Frequently Occurring Content Bearing Words
for Research Question Two

Word	*Frequency*	*Percent*	*Word*	*Frequency*	*Percent*
I	408	26.8	Right	17	1.1
Boyfriend	153	10.0	Never	16	1.0
Me	91	6.0	Care	12	0.8
Abortion	74	4.9	Feel	12	0.8
Mom	73	4.8	First	12	0.8
Tell	61	4.0	Girl	12	0.8
Know	59	3.9	Having	12	0.8
Dad	53	3.5	Supportive	11	0.7
Father	49	3.2	Hard	10	0.7
Think	45	3.0	Life	10	0.7
Parent	43	2.8	Thing	10	0.7
Pregnant	37	2.4	Believe	9	0.6
Sister	31	2.0	Kids	9	0.6
Talk	31	2.0	People	9	0.6
Family	28	1.8	Couldn’t	8	0.5
Baby	26	1.7	Down	8	0.5
Friend	22	1.4	Married	8	0.5
Decision	20	1.3	Need	8	0.5
Anything	19	1.2	Roommate	8	0.5

Note. Total words = 1524. Total unique words = 38

search for patterns and relationships among the words identified as significant through the use of frequency analysis.

In order to study only those aspects of the transcribed data that dealt with respondent self-disclosure choices, answers to this study's research questions were removed from the rest of the data. The text was further divided by answers to research question one (first contact) and research question two (no contact). Extraction of the relevant answers resulted in approximately 400 pages of text to be analyzed. The text was then prepared to be read by the CATPAC qualitative analysis program. An initial analysis was run in order to identify all variations on the same root words. The initial analysis yielded 2,224 words for the "first contact" file and 1,636 words for the "no contact" file. Both files were automatically limited to identify 50 unique words. The word frequency output provided by CATPAC was useful in identifying words that could be combined in order to streamline the analysis. For example, plural forms (e.g., friend and friends) of a word were changed into the singular form. Additionally, contractions, synonyms and past tense forms of words (e.g., tell and told) were changed into a standard form. Occasionally, the original text was consulted to make sure that combining certain words was appropriate. For example, the words "dad" and "father" were carefully considered. When reexamined as part of the whole text it became apparent that these two words were addressing two different relationships in the respondent's life. "Dad" was indicative of the respondent's biological father while "father" was in reference to the biological father of her current pregnancy. Similarly, the words "partner" and "boyfriend" were left alone because while they were both being used to indicate the father of the respondent's current pregnancy, the respondent's word choice was an

indicator of how she viewed her relationship with this sexual partner. This process continued until only "content-bearing" words were being identified by CATPAC.

In addition to making individual choices about combining certain words, the CATPAC program comes with an exclude file (see Table 3). This file tells the software to ignore certain words thought to not be "content-bearing" words (CATPAC users manual, 1998, p. 31). Included in the exclude file are determiners, prepositions, etc. (i.e. these, those, his, hers, etc.). The standard exclude file includes 192 words, with the option to add any words the researcher deems necessary. While streamlining the text for analysis, it was determined that the words probably and stuff should be added to the exclude file. These two words topped the frequency listings but were determined to not be "content-bearing words".

The final analysis of the "first contact" text yielded 1,388 words while the "no contact" file resulted in 1,525 words. CATPAC rank orders the unique words in each document according to how frequently they appear in the text. The parameters were set at 50 unique words during the text cleaning phase and later set to 38 for the final analysis. This number was chosen in that it represents the number of "content-bearing" words identified during the cleaning phase of analysis.

The CATPAC program also generates a matrix of co-occurring words based on which of the unique words appear within five substantive words of each other. The number of times each of the co-occurring words appears together is then plotted on a "dendogram" (see Tables 4 and 5). A "dendogram" is output from the hierarchical cluster analysis and looks like the "skyline of a city seen from afar" (CATPAC user manual,

Table 3
Exclude File

A	By	Going	Know	On	Such	Verily
About	Came	Gone	Less	One	Take	Very
Actually	Can	Got	Let	Only	Than	Want
After	Come	Had	Like	Onto	That	Was
Also	Could	Has	Lot	Or	The	Wasn't
Although	Did	Have	Made	Other	Their	Way
Always	Didn’t	He	Make	Our	Theirs	We
Am	Didn’t	Her	Many	Ours	Them	Well
An	Do	Here	May	Out	Then	Went
And	Does	Hers	Mean	Own	There	Were
Another	Doesn’t	Hers	Mid	Pretty	These	What
Any	Done	Hi	Miss	Probably	They	Whatever
Are	During	Him	Mister	Really	They'd	When
As	Each	Himself	More	Said	This	Where
At	Ect	His	Most	Same	Those	Which
Back	Either	How	Mrs	Saw	Though	While
Basically	Even	If	Much	Say	Through	Who
Be	Ever	In	Must	See	Thus	Why
Because	Every	Into	My	She	To	Will
Been	Exclude	Is	Neither	She'll	Too	With
Before	For	Isn't	No	Should	Tried	Would
Being	From	It	Nor	Since	Try	Wouldn’t
Besides	Gave	Its	Not	So	Until	Years
Best	Get	It's	Now	Some	Up	Yet
Between	Give	Just	Of	Something	Us	You
Both	Go	Kept	Off	Still	Use	Your
But	Goes	Kind	Oh	Stuff	Using	Yours

Table 4
Dendogram Output for Research Question One

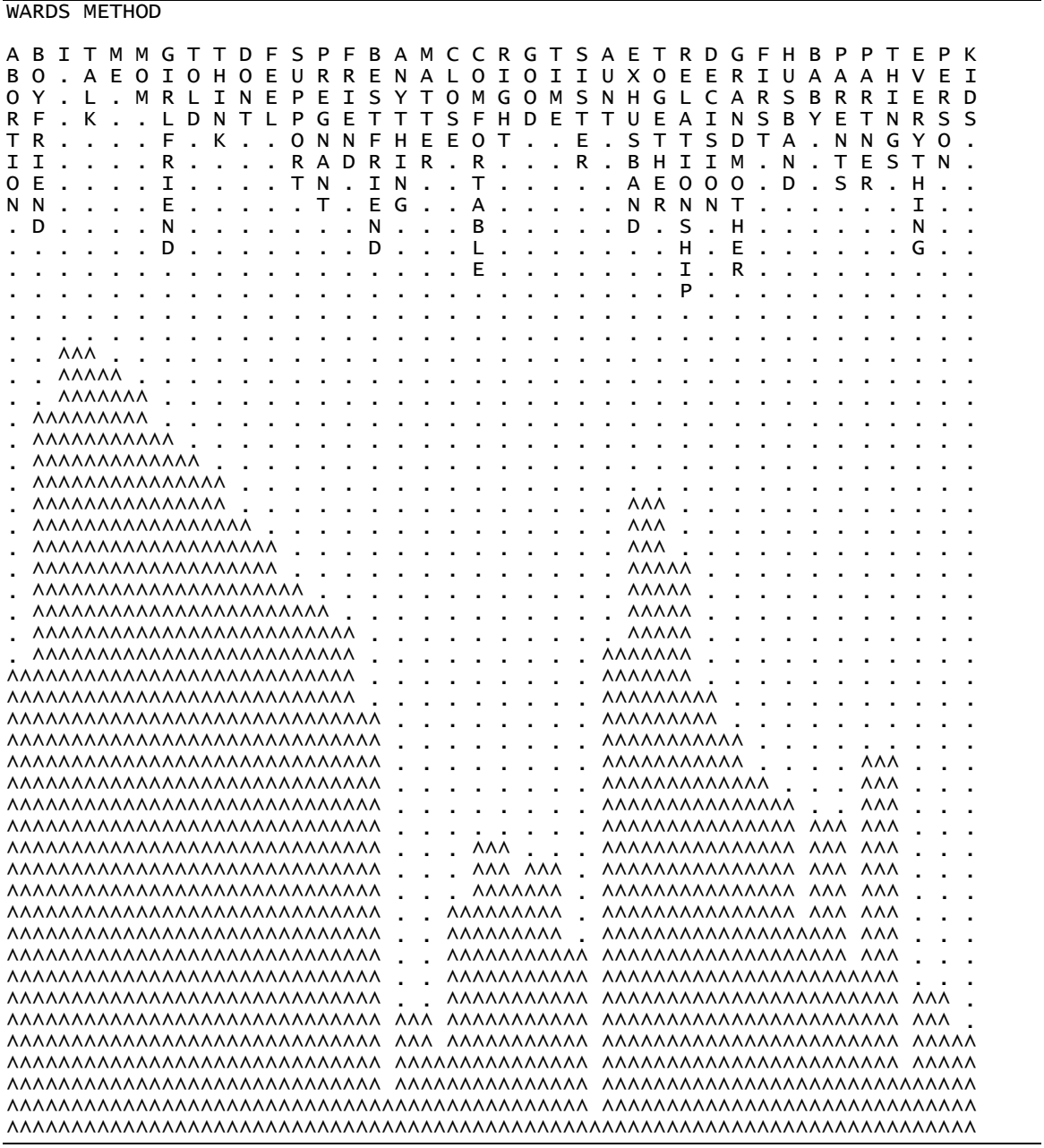
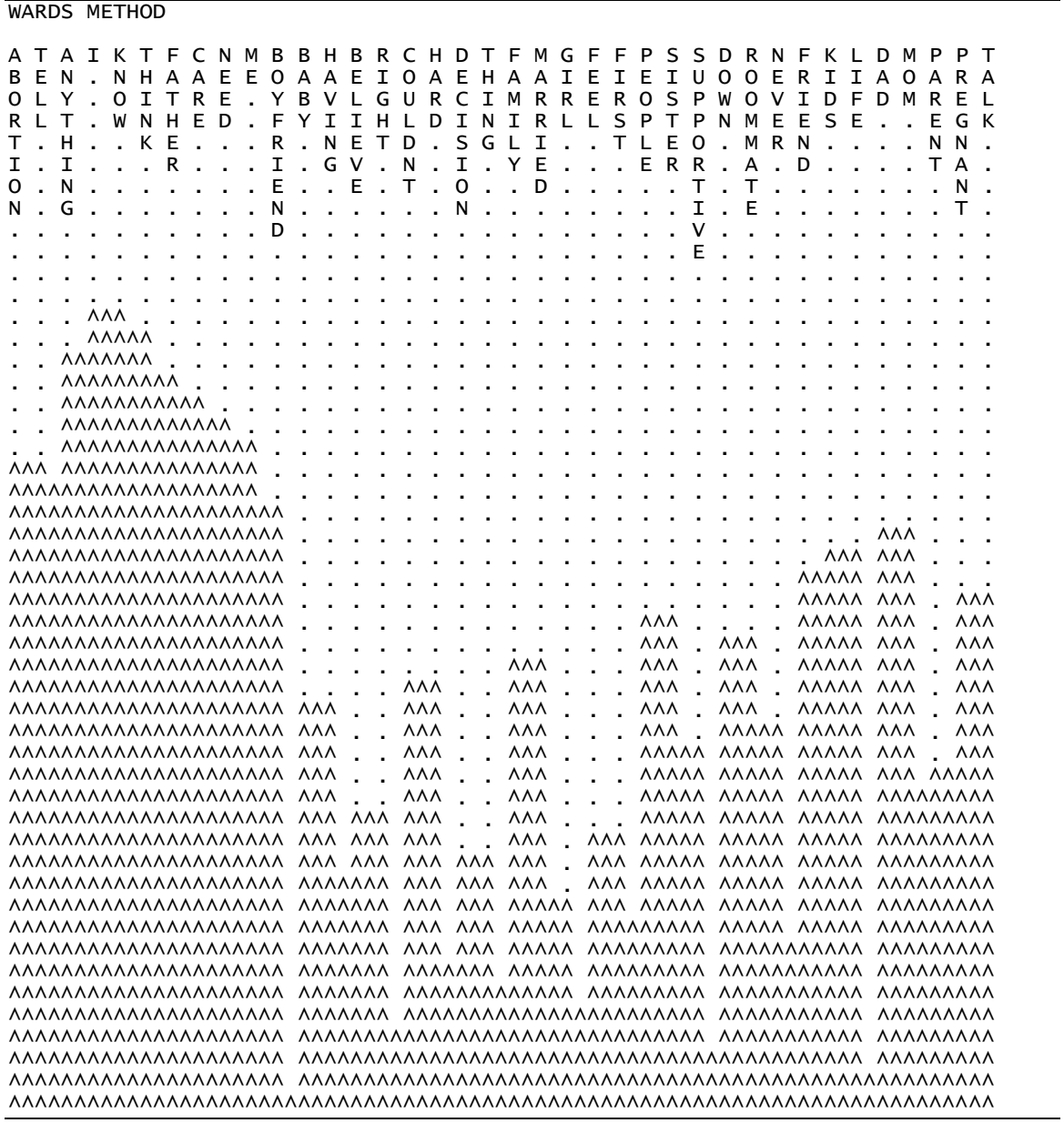


Table 5
Dendogram output for Research Question Two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O L Y . O I T R E . Y B V L G U R C I M R R E R O S P W O V I D F D M R E L
R L T . W N H E D . F Y I I H L D I N I R L L S P T P N M E E S E . . E G K
T . H . . K E . . . R . N E T D . S G L I . . T L E O . M R N . . . . N N .
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1998, p. 32). Those words, which co-occur most frequently are plotted closely together and form the "buildings" underneath the words in that cluster. Clusters are identified by breaks in between the "buildings." The "first contact" text resulted in eight individual clusters with anywhere from two to eight unique words per cluster. The "no contact" text yielded six clusters with between four to 11 unique words per cluster. Once the clusters of commonly occurring words have been identified, the next step is to identify each individual cluster of words within the full text. At this point, the researcher performed several careful readings of each text focusing on how the clustered words interact within the larger text. The results of each, individual cluster analyses are described in the results section.

Multi-Dimensional Scaling (MDS) was then applied to the cluster analysis produced by CATPAC. The graphs generated by MDS analysis provide a visual representation of the distances between words in the individual clusters. Bergstrom and Holmes (2000) explain,

> The word co-occurrence matrix was converted into a correlation matrix, using SPSS, where the symmetric values of $cell_{(ij)}$ represent the extent to which word *i* and *j* co-occur with each other word. Thus, the correlations represent the similarity of words *i* and *j*. The higher the correlation, the more similar, and the closer the two words are to each other. (p. 391)

The MDS program then spatially graphs the distances among the words in *n*-dimensional space. According to Bergstrom and Holmes (2000),

> The optimum number of dimensions is the smallest number that produces an acceptable stress value. The stress value indicated, for any particular n-dimensional result, how well the location of the words in that space represents the underlying correlation strengths. Typically, researchers choose to report results for only two or three dimensions in a network analysis; dimensions greater than three are difficult to represent and to interpret visually. (p. 391)

The MDS solution for "first contact" clusters stopped at 27 iterations when the stress value improvement was less than .001. The final stress value of the three-dimensional solution, for the 38 unique words was .14. The MDS solution for the "no contact" clusters stopped at 16 iterations (again when the stress value improvement was less than .001). The final stress value for the three-dimensional solution for the 38 "no contact" words was .16.

Both solutions were close to the ideal stress value of less than .1, and were deemed appropriate given the three-dimensional solutions allowed for "neighborhood" analysis and individual plotting of the MDS solutions for each cluster obtained in the hierarchical cluster analysis for both research questions.

Qualitative Textual Analysis

In order to extract the rules for disclosure identified in the clusters of text, a more qualitative, modified form of textual analysis was conducted. CATPAC organized the text into clusters of meaning useful in answering the "who" part of research questions one and two. However, additional detailed analysis was necessary in order to answer the "why" part of the research questions. By engaging in a more traditional form of textual analysis, the respondent's individual thoughts and reasoning regarding their rules of self-disclosure were allowed to emerge.

According to McCracken (1988), "The object of analysis is to determine the categories, relationships, and assumptions that informs the respondent's view of the world in general and the topic in particular" (p. 42). While there is some room for some flexibility, Cresswell (1997) argues there are "core elements of qualitative data analysis" (p. 148) shared by all approaches to qualitative research. Fundamentally, data analysis in

qualitative research consists of "preparing and organizing the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the data in figures, tables, or a discussion" (p. 148). These categories and codes form the basis for the "emerging story to be told by the qualitative researcher" (Cresswell, 1994, p. 154).

In the first phase of data analysis, CATPAC was used to form clusters of meaning out of approximately 400 pages of text. In the second phase of data analysis, each cluster was reread and examined for the specific conditions of disclosure respondents took into consideration before choosing a confidant. As each cluster was examined, the question of "why" was asked in order to draw out the participant's rules/reasoning behind their disclosure decisions. For example in the girlfriend cluster of research question number one, statements such as "we talk about everything" or girlfriend "is not opinionated" were removed from the larger cluster of text and listed on a separate sheet of paper. Once all of the rules were extracted and listed by cluster they were examined for similarities. Similar rules for disclosure were grouped together and labeled based on identifiable characteristics. For example, in the girlfriend cluster of research question number one, a number of adjectives were extracted in answer to the question of why this particular person was chosen for disclosure (i.e., understanding, support, trust, comfortable, etc.). These adjectives were grouped together and coded as "personal qualities" of chosen confidants. Similarly in research question number two, the "firsts" cluster yielded comments such as "Important for parents to be satisfied with me" and "Didn't want Dad to feel disappointed" in reference to why respondents chose not to disclose to certain people in her life. These two comments were grouped together and coded as "Impression

Management." This process continued through both research questions one and two until all rules for disclosure had been extracted, categorized and coded.

Once all categories had been extracted and coded, each category was then visually mapped by cluster into a software program called Inspiration. This software allows users to graphically organize concepts thereby enhancing the researcher's ability to "organize ideas, see relationships and categorize concepts" (http://www.inspiration.com/Educators/Research). Specifically, a visual display of the rules for disclosure allowed similar categories and rules across clusters to be compared and contrasted. Similar rules for disclosure or nondisclosure across clusters were then color coded for ease of analysis. The clusters and corresponding rules of disclosure for each research question are discussed in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The following chapter is organized in to two sections. The first section discusses the results of the CATPAC analysis for research questions one and two. Following the CATPAC analysis, the results of the second qualitative textual analysis will be discussed for research questions one and two.

CATPAC Analysis of Research Question One - "When you realized you were pregnant, who did you go to first for support or advice?"

In this research question the respondents are describing the people or person in their lives they went to first when they realized they were unintentionally pregnant. CATPAC identified eight clusters of words that appeared frequently together throughout the text. Of those eight clusters, six identified a specific person or relationship that they approached first to discuss their pregnancy and their reasons for this choice. In the last two clusters, the respondents begin to describe references to more global definitions of approachable relationships (see Table 6). For example, analysis of the text identifies

Table 6
Thematic Word Clusters for Research Question One

Theme	*Cluster Contents*
Girlfriend	[abortion, everything, girlfriend, support, right, kids, things]
Boyfriend	[baby, person, boyfriend, don't comfortable, first, time]
Extended Family	[aunt, grandmother, ex-husband, parents, partner]
Mom	[anything, I, me, talk, mom, told, pregnant, feel, think]
Non-Kin Sister	[bestfriend, sister, close]
Husband	[decision, husband]
Friend defined	[friend, good, matter]
Connections	[relationship, together]

definitions of a "good friend" or descriptions of the relationship connection the respondent and her confidant have together. Respondent text, in this chapter is presented in the modified form created for analysis by the CATPAC software, numbered and separated from the rest of the text. Each cluster will be discussed in turn.

"Girlfriend" Cluster

Reading the dendogram from left to right, the first cluster contains the words *abortion, everything, girlfriend, support, right, kids and things* (see Figure 1). The word *abortion* (*n* =19) is clearly the taboo topic about which respondents were making disclosure decisions, and is spatially distanced from the other words. The terms *everything* (*n* = 16) and *things* (*n* = 12), when placed back into the text, are being used to encompass taboo topics (i.e., birth control and sex) of which *abortion* is one. When asked why she chose a particular girlfriend to disclose her current situation, respondents frequently reported being able to talk about *everything* or *things* with this friend. The word *girlfriend* (*n* = 86) is a relational marker indicating the relationship between the respondent and her chosen confidant. *Support* (*n* = 22) represents the end result of communication and disclosure. *Right* (*n* = 11) is a word that indicates timing (i.e., not the *right* time) or the partner's *right* to know. *Kids* (*n*= 10) appears in the text on several different levels. First, several of the married respondents discussed the impact this pregnancy would have on the children they already have. Secondly, many of the *girlfriends*, sought out by respondents, had *kids* of their own. Finally, the word *kid* represents respondents predicting the impact having a child would have on her life.

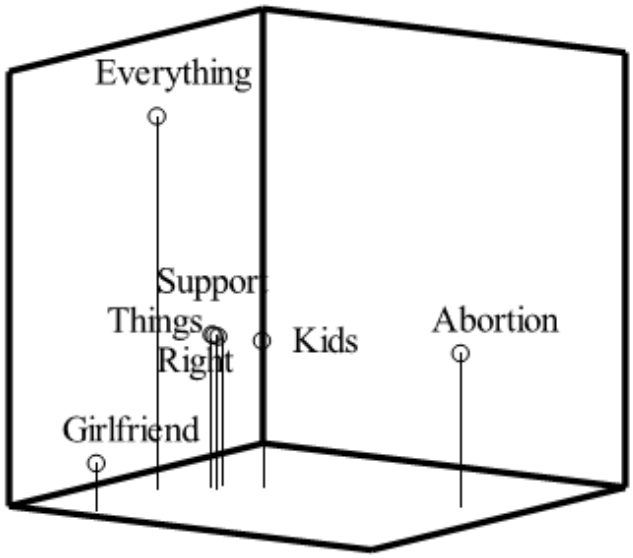

Figure 1 Visual Representation of “Girlfriend” Cluster

The word *girlfriend* is a key concept in this cluster and links to all the other words on a variety of levels. On one level, this cluster reflects the respondent's communication history with the confidant. Having taboo conversations with their friend in the past provided them with the level of comfort necessary to approach them for support with their unintended pregnancy.

(1) My *girlfriend*. We have always just talk about *everything* with each other for years.

(2) She is just a *girlfriend* and I told *girlfriend everything* and so it was just easy to go and be like well I am pregnant. Just because *girlfriend* know me so well. I know *girlfriend* wouldn't be uncomfortable.

(3) My *girlfriend* at work. I trust *girlfriend* because I have told *girlfriend things* in the past and it kind of works both ways. If *girlfriend* is having a problem *girlfriend* will talk to me. Because I know *girlfriend* wouldn't judge me.

(4) My *girlfriend*. *Girlfriend* has been my best friend since fifth grade. Because I talk to *girlfriend* about *everything*. *Girlfriend* is also pregnant, *girlfriend* is five days behind me.

Essentially, respondents knew this particular *girlfriend* would be safe to talk too based on previous discussions about topics considered to be taboo.

In addition to previous communication experience, this cluster reflects the tendency of respondents to pick a confidant who also had previous pregnancy experience with *kids, abortion* or both.

(5) We have discussed our problems with our partners or whatever is going on we have discussed. *Girlfriend* had *kids* when she was 17. *Girlfriend* has had

abortion and so *girlfriend* has actually held my hand through all of my *kids* and all of my pregnancies and whatever.

(6) My *girlfriend*. Well yeah because most of *girlfriend* had had this kind of problem. *Girlfriend* think they were pregnant and *girlfriend* came to me and I talk to *girlfriend*.

(7) Well my one *girlfriend* had an *abortion* and I was with her ten years ago. *Girlfriend* has not had one regret and that was before she had any *kids*…

Past experience played heavily into respondent's choices to disclose. If a *girlfriend* with past experience was not available, respondents found other people who knew about this process as will become evident in subsequent clusters. The choice to speak with someone with previous pregnancy experience was helpful for two reasons. Logistically, confiding in someone who has previously had an abortion gives them the ability to answer questions about cost, location, pain level or repercussions (emotional and physical). Respondents are therefore able to get their questions answered by a trusted friend as opposed to having to disclose to someone with whom they have no history (i.e., clinic staff). Furthermore, confiding in someone who already has kids gives the respondents inside information on the challenges of raising children. Respondents reported talking to confidants about

(8) …everything like abortion, miscarriage, getting pregnant and having the delivery and how much diapers and formula cost.

Talking to a trusted friend about the challenges of raising children may have helped the respondents to believe that their decision to terminate was the best decision for them in spite of social pressure to give birth. However, this choice was not only wise logistically.

When making choices about who to self disclose to, respondents were engaging in a form of risk management. Disclosing a taboo issue to someone who has similar experience or who has made similar choices lessens the risk that the confidant will become angry, judgmental or worse, violate the respondent's trust.

(9) *Girlfriend* has always been there for me kept everything that I have asked best girlfriend to secret so I know I could trust best girlfriend.

The previous experience of terminating a pregnancy meant that the chosen confidant was a safer choice than choosing someone who had never been through the process of making this decision.

Support (coupled closely with *girlfriend*) represents the perceived outcome of the conversation with the chosen *girlfriend* (I knew she would be supportive, She has always been supportive, etc.).

(10) It doesn't matter what I chose, girlfriend will support me no matter what choice I make.

(11) *Girlfriend* is understanding. *Girlfriend* doesn't give an opinion *girlfriend* just *support* me there is no opinion.

(12) I was worried about how best girlfriend would react but I know best girlfriend would be support and we have been through a lot.

(13) *Girlfriend* was there for *support*.

Another important grouping, in the first cluster, centers on the words *kids* and *right*. Although this particular cluster does not directly deal with self-disclosure choices, it sheds light on the magnitude of this decision and why respondents found it necessary to disclose a risky aspect of their lives. When these two words are re-embedded in the

interview text, two important circumstances are brought to light. First, if the respondent already has children, the word *right* references their obligation to their other children. They believed that bringing an additional child into the family would stretch resources to the point that the current children would be denied opportunities to which they had a *right* (i.e., college). For several respondents, having another child would require spending money reserved for college funds, etc. and they believed it to be their responsibility to give them an education:

(14) I think it is just a lot easier and nicer if the parents can provide for schooling and you know that type of stuff. I think it is kind of wrong to have *kids* that you are going to have to go and have the state take care of. I think you should be able to take care of your own *kids*.

Other respondents may not have mentioned a loss of privileges, but were concerned about the emotional and relational impact an additional child would have on their other children.

(15) …if you have other children it is going to affect their lives as well and that is the main reason that I made the decision that I made…I don't want to affect my son that is already here in a negative way.

Other respondent mothers stated,

(16) My two children are everything in the world to me and I don't want to hinder anything in my relationship with them.

In this context, the coupling of the words *kids* and *right* reflects the woman's need to fulfill her obligation, whether tangible or relational, to the children she already has.

Secondly, if the respondent did not already have children, the word *right* references timing of children (i.e., not the right time). Through communication, these women recognized the tremendous responsibility, both financial and emotional, of raising children and believed they could not meet the challenge at this time.

(17) I don't think a lot of young women think about like in terms of worries and problems when your baby gets sick and your living paycheck to paycheck what is going to happen to your baby if you need to go get medicine but can't afford it?

Timing issues included needing to finish school, not being in a relationship they believed was strong enough to support a child, not being financially stable, or believing they were too young to be a parent.

(18) …because I am only 16 *right* now and it would be hard to raise a baby especially when I am only working part time and I am still in school…

Similarly:

(19) I am not ready you know physically, mentally and he is in school and you know I just finished my school and I am working so there is no way that I would be able to work less and it's a big responsibility

Another interesting disclosure component to the coupling or the words *right* and *kids* presents itself in the text. Several of the respondents chose to self disclose to the biological father not out of any perceived support from them, but out of a sense of obligation. These particular women felt the need to inform the biological father of their decision (i.e., it's his *kid*, he has the *right* to know what I'm doing). Whereas a number of the respondents avoided discussing their decision with the biological father out of

perceived resistance to her decision, these women felt obligated to disclose in spite of not knowing what the outcome of that disclosure would be.

(20) I didn't know [if he would be supportive]. I'm like it's his baby, he should know and whatever happens you know happens. So I wasn't really worried about what was going to be the outcome.

Others concur,

(21) It was more that I don't think it is *right* not to tell him what I am choosing to do. But it wasn't to get *support*.

(22) Because he had to know even if he was upset he would get over it.

Interestingly, none of these women described approaching their partners for help or support in making this decision. Most of these women had already made the decision to terminate and were merely informing their partners.

(23) Well I told him I was going to have one. There wasn't any doubt in my mind. I wasn't going to change my mind. Even if he wanted to have it, I would have still said no.

These respondents approached their partners to inform them that she had already made her decision and was just letting them know what was going to happen.

"Boyfriend" Cluster

The next cluster contains the words *baby, person, boyfriend, don't*, *comfortable*, *first* and *time* (see Figure 2). *Baby* (n = 13) references the children of other people in the woman's life or her own children. *Person* (n = 12) is the respondent listing off her confidants in order (i.e., the first person I talked to…). *Boyfriend* (n = 103) is a relational

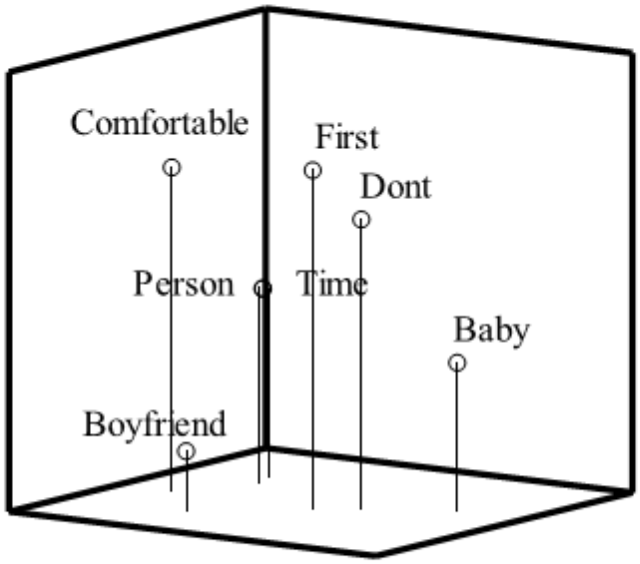

Figure 2 Visual Representation of "Boyfriend" Cluster

marker. *Don't* (*n* = 28) represents respondents listing all of the reasons not to give birth. *Comfortable* (*n* = 17) is the level of trust. The word f*irst* (*n* = 8) represents respondents reflecting on who they went to first to talk about their current pregnancy. Together, the words *first* and *time* (*n* = 11) represent respondents reflecting on various firsts in her life (i.e., first pregnancy, first abortion, first sex, etc.).

Boyfriend is a relationship marker closely tied to *baby* and represents one of two situations; either the person the woman was most *comfortable* talking to (21 out of 60 women went to the biological father first) or simply another consideration in the decision making process.

(24) Oh, I told *boyfriend*…he just basically told how *boyfriend* feel about it I would love to have another child with you but *boyfriend* feel like same way as you we *don't* have the money right now for another *baby*.

(25) This sounds so bad but *boyfriend* likes me no matter what. Like if I said I want to keep this *baby, boyfriend* would want to keep it. And if I said I didn't want it *boyfriend* wouldn't want it.

(26) I went to *boyfriend*. I didn't want to keep the baby. *Boyfriend* did but I didn't want to but *boyfriend* was pretty support.

The term *boyfriend* is also closely tied to the word *comfortable* in this cluster.

(27) Just the whole situation I know I can trust *boyfriend* and I just feel really *comfortable* talk to *boyfriend* about anything.

(28) …because *boyfriend* gives me that being *comfortable* with *boyfriend*. *Boyfriend* is someone I can trust.

(29) *Boyfriend* and I are just really, really close like that. We could talk about a lot of stuff but I just feel *comfortable* really *comfortable* with talk to *boyfriend*…

(30) I was *comfortable* going to *boyfriend* but I just didn't know how to do it.

Comfortable represents a level of relational trust that was necessary for these 21 women to disclose to their *boyfriend*. It is interesting to note that when the *boyfriend* was chosen as the first confidant, the coupling of *don't* and *comfortable* contextually become the respondent knowing that her boyfriend would support her in her decision to terminate. They were comfortable in the relationship but also in their knowledge that the decision she had already made about this pregnancy would not be countered by the boyfriend.

On the other side of the coin, the word *boyfriend* couples frequently with *don't* in that it represents respondents making their argument for wanting to terminate the pregnancy of which the *boyfriend* may be one consideration.

(31) *Boyfriend* know that I *don't* want to have *boyfriend* children right now…

(32) *Boyfriend* is not somebody that I would want to be with and I really would not want *boyfriend* to be involved in my life because that would connect me to this person for the rest of our lives.

(33) …part of it is it would tie us closer together, so *boyfriend* feels quite a bit stronger about the relationship than I do. *Boyfriend* knows I am scared of it so…

In addition to relationship issues, respondent's listed a number of reasons why they chose to terminate. A number of women argued that they *don't* have money, *don't* want to quit their job, *don't* feel ready, *don't* want to have *boyfriend*'s baby, *don't* know about

relationship with *boyfriend*, *don't* have enough room in their house, and *don't* know how others will react.

Also in this cluster the words *first* and *time* represents respondents reflecting further on their decision to disclose this pregnancy to their confidant. For example, in many cases this was not the respondent's *first* pregnancy. Therefore when discussing her choice of confidant she fell back on a previous discussion about being pregnant to support her decision to disclose to this particular person again. Comments such as

(34) …the *first time* I got pregnant

were common in addition to identifying other firsts (i.e. first sex, first pregnancy, etc.).

(35) Parents were support the *first time* I got pregnant…

(36) Every *time* I was pregnant I came to grandmother *first*.

(37) Mom know everything about me so it was just easy to talk to mom because I mean mom know the *first time* I ever have every type of thing I have ever tried.

Discussions about other taboo issues had gone well; therefore, it is safe to approach this person with the current situation. Whereas other clusters have identified previous experience with the confidant and discussing taboo topics, this cluster is a direct link to the topic of pregnancy and the confidant's ability to be supportive.

(38) I knew she would be supportive because she was the *first time*.

Overall, this cluster represents respondents reflecting on their choice to terminate and how this decision relates to the father of the baby. If her boyfriend could be trusted to support her decision, he was chosen as a confidant. However, if disclosing to her boyfriend was risky or would create an undesirable situation, the respondent had to

choose an alternate confidant. Under these circumstances, respondents relied on previous disclosure experiences (*firsts*) to choose a confidant.

"Extended Family" Cluster

This cluster houses family members [*Aunt* (*n* = 10), *Grandmother* (*n* = 24), *Ex-Husband* (*n* = 10), *Parents* (*n* = 10), *Partner* (*n* = 29)] that were sought out for support in making the decision to terminate the current pregnancy (see Figure 3). The spatial separation of the word *Aunt* may not be significant however, review of the text indicated that "Aunts" in this study were often categorized as being like a friend. Interestingly, this grouping contains the word *partner,* which is distinct from the term *boyfriend* in the previous cluster. *Boyfriend* is a relational marker used when the respondent believed she had a genuine relationship with the biological father. Conversely, the term *partner* when reattached to the interview text is used to signify the absence of a significant relationship between the respondent and the biological father. Self-disclosure in this case comes out of a sense of obligation rather than seeking support or help with the decision. Explanations such as

(39) he is the father

or

(40) he has the right to know

were given as justification for disclosing the pregnancy to their *partner*.

(41) Because *partner* has the right to know.

(42) Because *partner* had to know even if *partner* was upset, *partner* would get over it.

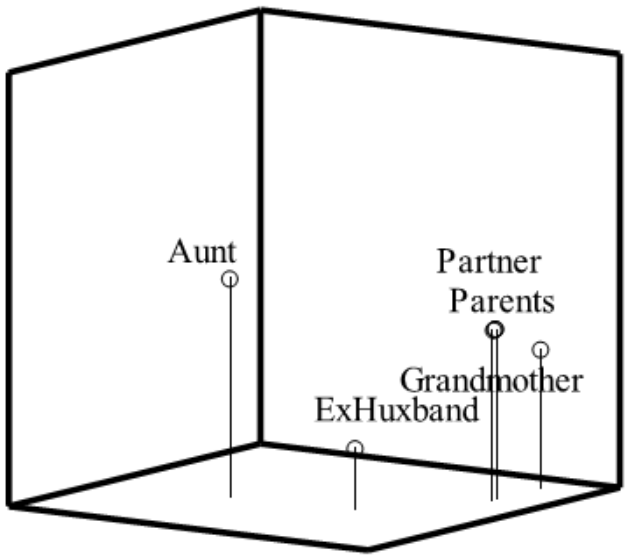

Figure 3 Visual Representation of “Extended Family” Cluster

This is distinctly different from seeking support from a *boyfriend* and provides different meanings used in the decision making process to disclose.

Other family members housed in this cluster [*Aunt, Grandmother, Ex-Husband, Parents*] were sought out for a variety of reasons. Like the "*girlfriend*" cluster, the respondent felt these individuals could be trusted based on previous experiences with them. Comments such as,

(43) has always been there for me

(44) has given help previously

and,

(45) doesn't hold grudges

were common responses when asked how the respondent knew it would be safe to talk to this person about her current pregnancy. At the age of 20, one respondent was on her third pregnancy of which she gave birth to the first two times. She described seeking out her *grandmother* first because,

(46) …every time I was pregnant I came to her first. *Grandmother* is very understanding and *grandmother* has always brought up situations that *grandmother* has been in to make me feel really comfortable.

Others sought out an *aunt* for support. Similarly, respondents on their second pregnancy, reported seeking out an *aunt* for support because she had done so with her first pregnancy.

(47) Well my *aunt* helped me out with the last one so I talked to *aunt* about a week after I found out that I was pregnant and she said okay let's get your stuff.

Another respondent was on her first pregnancy but had watched her aunt offer support to her own children and was confident that she would also be supportive of the respondent's situation.

(48) *Aunt* has helped my other cousins that have been pregnant, so I knew *aunt* would help me.

Family members are not always the safest choice for disclosure of taboo topics. Similar to the other confidant choices, respondents relied on indicators other than the relationship when assessing self-disclosure risk.

At first glance it would seem that the term *parents* is referencing the respondent's parents. However, further elaboration from the text shows this is not the case. The *parents* referenced in cluster five are not the woman's family but the parents of a best girlfriend. Respondents reported going to a best friend's parents for two reasons;

(49) Best girlfriend has a really open family and best girlfriend's *parents* are very open and talk to best girlfriend constantly and *parents* run a pharmacy and parents know what kind of precautions to take and so parents were very helpful in talking about those things.

This respondent's choice in confidants implies that her own family may not be as open about issues surrounding sexuality and knowing that her girlfriend's family was gave her confidence to approach them for support in her current situation. It was also helpful that her friend's family was involved in the medical field and could provide answers to questions in addition to emotional support.

"Mom" Cluster

In this cluster we see a relational marker for one of the respondent's parents [*Anything, I, Me, Talk, Mom, Told, Pregnant, Feel, Think*] (see Figure 4). Similar to "Abortion" in earlier clusters, *anything* (*n* = 16) is a marker for topics that are taboo and appears spatially separated from the other words. *I* (*n* = 344) and *me* (*n* = 97) are personal pronouns used when the respondent is referencing her situation or her feelings. *Talk* (*n* = 55) is the act of disclosing. *Mom* (*n* = 111) is a relational marker referencing the respondent's biological mother. *Told* (*n* = 39) is a past tense reference to disclosure. *Pregnant* (*n* = 28) is the current taboo topic about which the respondent has to make the decision of whether or not to disclose. *Feel* (*n* = 27) and *think* (*n* = 27) are references to the respondent's thoughts and emotions.

This is the only cluster which mentions a respondent's parent; her mother. Of the 60 women interviewed, eight chose their mothers as their first confidant. Other respondents may have chosen to talk to their mothers eventually (as evidenced by *mom* being the second most frequently occurring word) but the decision came after confiding in another individual. Similar to the "girlfriends" cluster, the eight women who reported going to their mothers first also reported knowing of their mother's previous experience with unintended pregnancy.

(50) …*mom* has done it all, *mom* has kids, *mom* has given a baby up for adoption and *mom* has had an *abortion*. So because of the past and *mom* has been really support and the basis of our relationship together I think *mom* will be there.

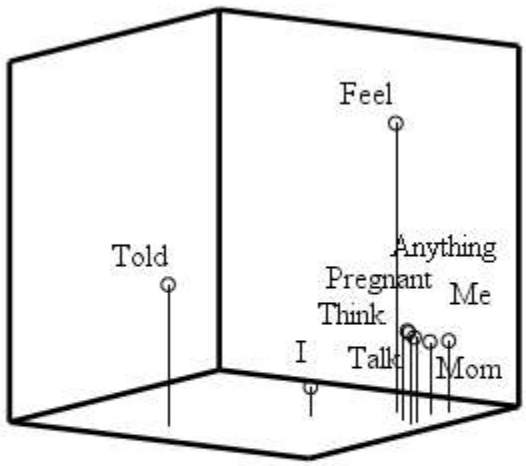

Figure 4 Visual Representation of “Mom” Cluster

(51) Because *mom* got pregnant when *mom* was my age and *mom* gave it up for adoption so *I* know *mom* would understand how *I feel*.

Another respondent approached her mother because of a past situation with her older sister. This situation encouraged the mother to approach her younger daughter and open communication about pregnancy and abortion.

(52) *Mom* has discussed abortion before. My older sister had an abortion without *told mom*. *Mom feel* that *mom* could have *talk* to older sister about abortion and *mom talk* about that after *mom* know my sister had had an abortion and *told* me that if that ever happens to *talk* to *mom* and let *mom* know so *mom* could be there for *me*.

Other respondents reported being *told* directly by their mothers that she could *talk* to her about *anything*.

(53) Because *mom told me* that *I* could always *talk* to *mom* about *anything*.

(54) *Mom* would *talk* to *me* about birth control and if *I* needed or if *I* decided to have sex that *mom* would help *me* get birth control.

(55) My *mom*. *Me* and my mom are way close so *I* definitely went to my *mom* when *I* lost my virginity and started smoking or *anything*. *I* was always *told* no matter what that *mom* was there. So *I* wasn't scared to go to *mom*…

(56) *Mom* has always been understanding. *Mom* never judges so *I feel* like *I* could *talk* to *mom* about my problems. *Mom* has discussed abortion before.

(57) My *mom*. We are really close. *I* can *talk* to *mom* about *anything*. *I* was really nervous at first but so *I* know *mom* wouldn't do that to *me* so actually we both

went up to *mom* and *talk mom* about it so that helped too. Because *mom* loves *me*. Whatever *I* decide *mom* is there for *me*.

Some respondents described a difficult history with her mother that eventually resulted in a strengthened bond between them. Others described changing relationships with her mother that opened the lines of communication regarding taboo topics.

(58) Now that *mom* is clean we have a better relationship and *mom* is my friend so *I* can go to *mom* and *I* can *told mom* these things and *mom* says things like okay we will roll with it. *Mom* has when *I* was little *mom* was the best *mom* to *me* and that is who *mom* is now *mom* is back to the way that *mom* was when *I* was little. And *I* can go and *I* could *told mom anything* because it was just *mom* and *I*. And *I* can *told mom anything* now and *I* just *mom* has changed so much…

All of these "rules" in the decision making process to disclose, speak to a general willingness of these mothers to openly discuss taboo topics with their daughters. Whether the mothers opened lines of communication with their daughters or openly discussed their previous experiences with them, the message was still the same; self-disclosing to *mom* is safe.

"Nonkin Sister" Cluster

This cluster is a depiction of female, sibling or sibling-like relationships with all words appearing spatially close in the same neighborhood [*Bestfriend* (*n* = 25), *Sister* (*n* = 35), *Close* (*n* = 15)] (see Figure 5). With only two exceptions, the *bestfriend* referenced

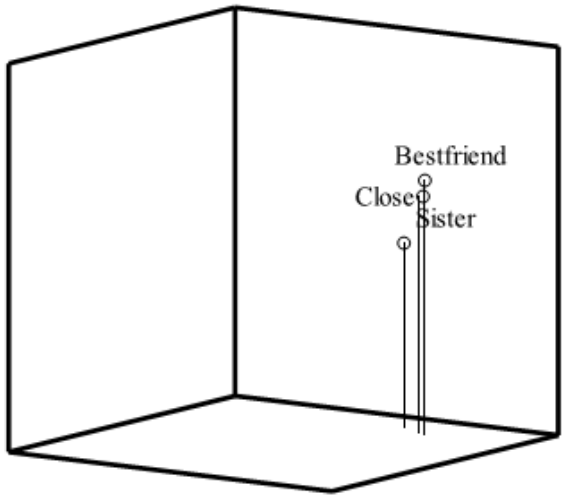

Figure 5 Visual Representation of “Nonkin Sister” Cluster

is a female (i.e., in one case the respondent defines her husband as her bestfriend). In this grouping the respondents are defining her confidant as being *close*,

(59) …like a *bestfriend*

This analogy goes both ways. When the female confidant is her biological *sister*, the relationship is defined as being *bestfriends*.

(60) We are really *close,* we are like *bestfriends* more than anything.

Some respondents had the advantage of not only having a *sister* who

(61) …is like my very *bestfriend*.

but her *sister* also had previous pregnancy experience. This added another level of comfort when making the decision to disclose her situation to her *sister*.

(62) *Sister* was pregnant and *sister* had a miscarriage but *sister* was going to get an abortion as well.

Like the "girlfriends" cluster, a close relational definition as well as previous communication and pregnancy experience, lessened the perceived risk of self disclosing a taboo topic to the confidant.

(63) Well usually we can talk about anything. I had a prior abortion. *Sister* was really supportive in that.

Alternatively, when the female confidant was not biologically related, she was defined as being close like a *sister*. This cluster speaks to the importance of confidants being in affectionate relationships with the respondent. When asked about choosing this particular person to disclose to, statements such as

(64) we are like *sisters*

or

(65) my *sister* is my *bestfriend*

seems to be justification enough for their choice. How the concept of *bestfriend* is defined will become more apparent in the later cluster where global definitions of friend are described.

"Husband" Cluster

This cluster [*decision* (*n* = 8), *husband* (*n* = 18)] is small but very straightforward with both terms close and in the same neighborhood (see Figure 6). When the respondent is married to the biological father of the current pregnancy, he was the first person she sought out for help in making the decision of whether or not to terminate. This cluster also represents a change in the attitude of respondents. Previous, unmarried, respondents described the act of informing the biological father of their decision to terminate. Rarely did they invite him into the decision making process. Conversely, the fact that *husband* and *decision* are so closely connected suggest that in the confines of a marriage, there was a decision to be made rather than a choice to be supported.

(66) I needed *husband* help in making the *decision*.

(67) My *husband*. We trust each other enough and I respect *husband* wishes and he respects, mine.

(68) Well I think it was because it was over the phone and it wasn't something that you could be personal and talk to *husband* in person and then having to come here by myself was hard but I think *husband* had a sense having a four month old baby and *husband* being gone all the time was too difficult. So I think it was an easy *decision husband* was being supportive.

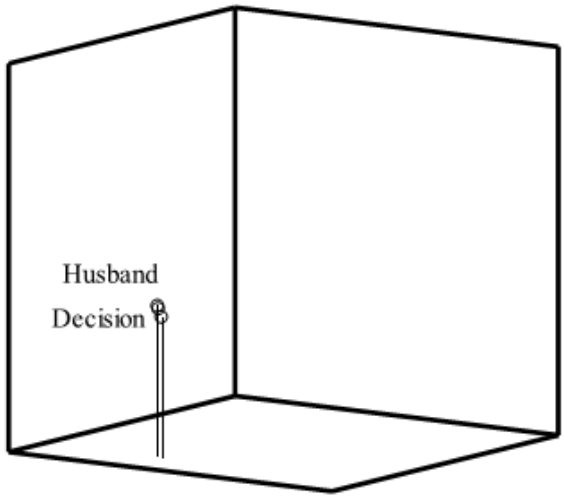

Figure 6 Visual Representation of “Husband” Cluster

Many of the married respondents discussed having several conversations with their husbands before making the decision to terminate.

(69) …we thought about it and we discussed the pros and cons and we just think that it is the best way out and we both agreed and that's pretty much it.

Similar to the unmarried mothers interviewed, the married mothers also discussed the impact that another baby would have on their children. In all cases where the respondent was married, there were other children to consider. Many of the married respondents talked about not wanting to terminate but believing their responsibilities to their other children left them with no other choice.

(70) We just faced the facts that it is just not fair…it's just not fair to the other kids.

(71) We didn't know what to do but we knew that we didn't want to have anymore kids.

Consistently, the discussion between the respondent and her husband centered on their current situation and what the consequences of having another child would be.

From this point on there is a shift in focus of the clusters identified by CATPAC. While previous clusters have focused on specific individuals (i.e., girlfriend, aunt, grandmother, mother, etc.) subsequent clusters focus on global distinctions describing the type of person who would make a good confidant or a description of a general relational connection.

"Friend Defined" Cluster

This cluster houses three words [*Friend* (*n* = 30), *Good* (*n* = 30), *Matter* (*n* = 8)] which are spatially close together (see Figure 7). This cluster, when embedded back in the text, shows the respondents discussing the relational parameters of a *good friend*. Specifically, *good friend*s support you no *matter* what.

(72) Well my one girlfriend right now especially because it doesn't *matter* what I do girlfriend will give me girlfriend opinion and it doesn't *matter* what I chose girlfriend will support me no *matter* what choice I make. Every time I have needed something girlfriend will be there for me no *matter* what.

(73) It's just a girlfriend I have had since elementary school. Just because girlfriend is a *good friend*. I mean I didn't know if girlfriend would be support of my decision but we have been *good friend*.

(74) I know close girlfriend would understand and close girlfriend would be a very *good friend* and give me advice and stuff.

For the women who already had children, they could rely on past experience with a similar situation in which their friend had been supportive.

(75) I knew she would support me because she did last time.

For women that were coping with their first pregnancy they relied on the relational definition they had already established for the friend. For example,

(76) I chose to talk to this person because she is a *good friend* and *good friends* support you no *matter* what.

Several respondents described not actually knowing how their friend would react to her decision to terminate a pregnancy but instead relying on her confidence in the

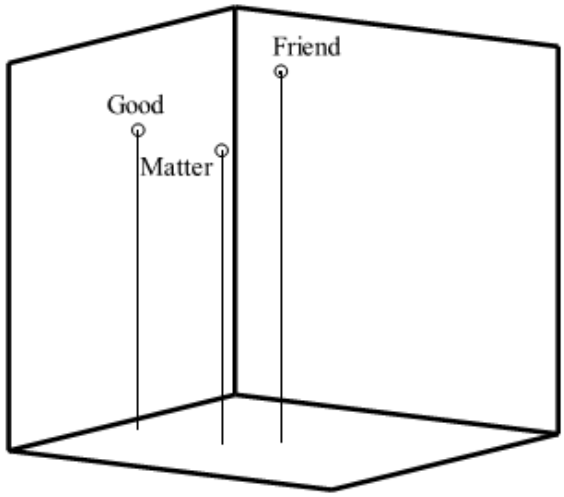

Figure 7 Visual Representation of “Friend Defined” Cluster

relational definition. Similar to the relational definition of husband, this cluster seems to imply that the relational definition of "*good friend*" carries with it a sense of obligation to disclose.

"Connections" Cluster

The next cluster encompasses the words *relationship* (*n* = 8) and *together* (*n* = 8) which are plotted close together in the same sphere (see Figure 8). Here we see the respondent describing the connection between herself and the chosen confidant or her partner. Respondents had a variety of connections to or history with their confidants;

(77) Best friend and I work *together*

(78) We were actually roommates *together* and shortly after we moved home girlfriend got pregnant and so girlfriend was the only person that I could think of to talk to that would understand

(79) We have gone through a lot *together* for four years ...

(80) I told sister because we live *together* so sister stayed with me…

(81) We don't hide anything from each other and both of us already know that we can talk to each other about anything. And the think that has kind of happened with me and boyfriend it's not just like a *relationship* and oh I have to go home to boyfriend everyday and oh do this *together*. Boyfriend is like my best friend and boyfriend at the same time.

This cluster serves to describe the relational connections respondents have with their chosen confidant.

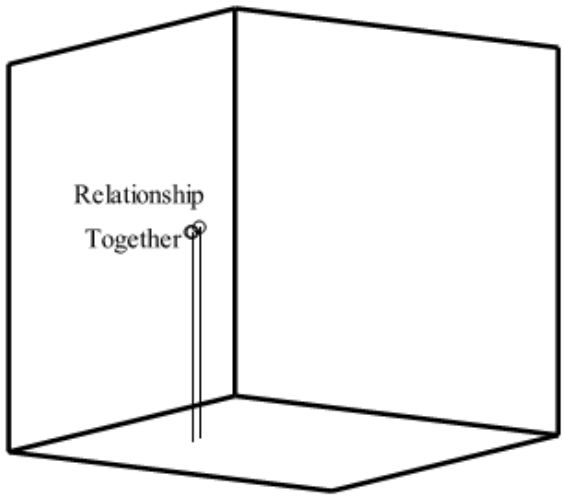

Figure 8 Visual Representation of “Connections” Cluster

CATPAC Analysis of Research Question Two

"Was there anyone in your life that you would have liked to talk to about your situation but chose not to?"

This question asks respondents to reflect on those people in their lives they actively made the decision not to discuss their current pregnancy with. This question doesn't just ask "who did you not speak to," but "who would you have liked to speak to" and chose otherwise. While research question one resulted in the identification of individuals, research question two produced clusters of words that were more global in their identification of individuals the respondents avoided talking to (see Table 7). Analysis of the clusters for research question two produced situations and circumstances that were to be avoided rather than specific people; with one noticeable exception. This shift in perspective is reasonable given respondents were likely to avoid disclosing to large numbers of people or types of people rather than a single individual. Reflecting on categories of unsafe individuals allowed respondents to discuss why they were risky as opposed to who was a risky choice. The only exception comes in a cluster where respondents specifically name mom, dad and parents as people they chose to avoid. Each cluster is discussed in turn.

"Forecasting" Cluster

Reading the dendogram from left to right, the first cluster contains the words [*abortion, tell, anything, I, know, think, father, care, need, me, boyfriend*] (see Figure 9). Similar to previous clusters, the words *abortion* and *anything* are separated spatially from

Table 7
Thematic Word Clusters for Research Question Two

Theme	*Cluster Contents*
Forecasting	[abortion, tell, anything, I, know, think, father, care, need, me, boyfriend]
Timing	[baby, having, believe, right]
Nonpartner relational risks	[couldn't, hard, decision, thing, family, married, girl]
Firsts	[feel, first, people, sister, supportive]
Consequences	[down, roommate, never, friend, kids, life]
Parents	[dad, mom, parent, pregnant, talk]

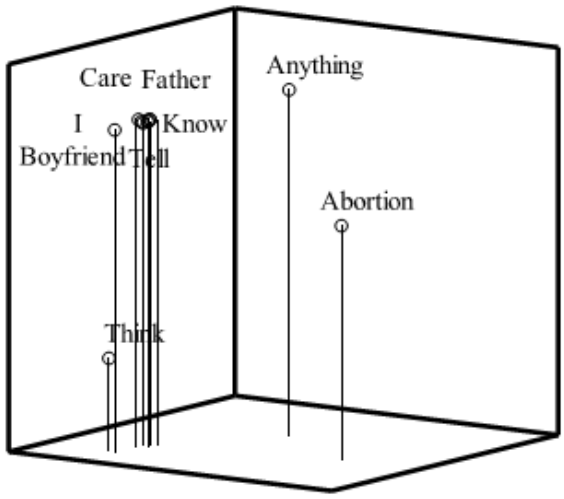

Figure 9 Visual Representation of “Forecasting” Cluster

the other words in the cluster and represent taboo topics. A*bortion* (*n*= 74) is obviously the topic respondents want to keep private. Similar to research question one, the word *anything* (*n*=19) when placed back into the text, becomes a kind of "catch all" word for all things taboo or negative (i.e., abortion, sex, etc.). The word *tell* (*n*=61) represents the act of disclosing (i.e., I would never *tell* dad…). *I* (*n*=408) and *me* (*n*=91) represent the respondent discussing her situation. The word *know* (*n*=60) represents respondents forecasting the outcome of disclosing to certain people in her life (i.e., I *know* how they would respond). Additionally, k*now* indicates the respondent's awareness that her choice to terminate is taboo (i.e., I didn't want many people to know). *Think* (*n*=45) is similarly contextualized to *know* in this cluster and represents the respondents speculating on the reactions of other people in her life (i.e. I *know* what they would *think*). Additionally, *think* represents the respondents justifying their decision not to tell certain people in her life (i.e., *I* didn't *think* they/he *need* to know). The term *father* (*n*=49) refers to the father of the baby, not the biological father of the respondent. B*oyfriend* (*n*=153) is a relational marker indicating the presence of a relationship between the respondent and the father of the baby. The use of the word *care* (*n*=12) represents respondents not being willing to listen to other people's opinions on abortion (i.e., *I* didn't *care* to hear other people's opinions on the subject). Additionally, respondents used the word care in reference to being able to take "care" of the situation on their own. Finally, *need* (*n*=8) is another word in this cluster that represents respondents justifying their decision not to disclose to certain people in their lives.

The overriding theme of this cluster is respondent's forecasting the outcome of disclosing her situation to certain individuals. However, the cluster specifically focuses

on the *father* of the baby or the respondent's *boyfriend*. On the surface, these two words seem interchangeable however, they indicate the respondent's perspective on the status of the relationship. The use of the word *father* suggests that the respondent did not view herself as being in a relationship with this individual and therefore he didn't need to be involved in the decision to terminate.

(1) Because it wasn't a relationship *I* didn't *think father need* to *know*.

(2) If *father* had anything to say *I* didn't *care*.

(3) The *father* of this child is not someone that *I* would want to be with. *I* really would not want *father* to be involved in my life and a baby would connect me to *father* for the rest of our lives.

Boyfriend, on the other hand, is a relationship marker and shows the perception of an attachment to the baby's father. In both cases cluster evidence shows respondents justifying their decision not to include the father/boyfriend in on her decision to terminate. The terms *father* and *boyfriend* link closely with the words *think*, *need* and *know* providing evidence of the respondent forecasting negative results of disclosing to them.

(4) *Boyfriend* could *care* less because all *boyfriend care* about are *boyfriend* drugs.

(5) *I know* the way *boyfriend* felt

(6) *Boyfriend* doesn't agree with *abortion* so *I* am not going to *tell boyfriend*.

(7) *I know* if I *tell boyfriend I* was pregnant *boyfriend* would have stopped *me* or hunted *me* down.

(8) *I think boyfriend* would have gotten upset. *I know boyfriend* wouldn't accept *abortion*. And *I think boyfriend* would be very upset with me *know I* did *abortion*."

(9) because *boyfriend* just didn't *care*

(10) *I* didn't *think* it is necessarily that *boyfriend* want more kids because *boyfriend* could *care* less…

(11) …*boyfriend* is not someone *I* want to deal with because *boyfriend* is kind of difficult to deal with sometimes. Whatever decision *I* make *boyfriend* would fight it whatever *I* decide to do.

(12) *I* just didn't feel comfortable talking to *boyfriend* because *boyfriend* is not open minded about a lot of things.

(13) *I* was waiting to see what was going to happen in our relationship. *I know* the way *boyfriend* felt, if *boyfriend* knew *boyfriend* got me pregnant then *I* would stay with *boyfriend* or something stupid like that.

(14) Boyfriend didn't *believe* in abortion…boyfriend was really excited about *having baby*.

(15) So *I* didn't *need* to tell *father*. *I* just *knew* what the reaction would be and *I* didn't *need* any more emotional trauma beside the fact that *I* was already going through with *abortion*.

In these situations, the respondents forecasted negative responses or apathy on the part of her partner and chose not to involve him in her decision. Whether respondents felt they knew what would happen or were speculating (*think*) about the results, the risk of disclosure was too great. It is worthy to note here that several respondents attempted to

discuss their pregnancy with their boyfriends but were ignored or met with resistance at the word pregnancy and chose not to move on to a discussion of abortion.

(16) *I* just decided to take *care* of *abortion* on my own since *father* was being immature.

One respondent even went as far as to leave her positive pregnancy test on her boyfriend's windshield with a note after he would not answer her calls or call her back. She states,

(17) I tried doing it the right way but *boyfriend* didn't want to.

The cluster theme of "forecasting" is also reflected by a link between the terms *need* and *care*. Frequently the word *care* is a result of the respondents forecasting about the thoughts and feelings of people in her life.

(18) *I* really didn't *care* what other peoples decisions are about *abortion*, *I* just didn't want to hear it

(19) *I* didn't *care* to hear other people's decisions or opinions on the subject of *abortion*.

(20) *I* am prochoice it didn't matter to *me I* didn't *need* other people dogging on *me* for *abortion*.

These respondent statements suggest that these women were aware of the taboo nature of abortion and did not want to experience the negative consequences of disclosing.

Finally, the word *care* in this cluster is used by respondents to suggest that they did not experience a need to disclose to anyone. A number of respondents reported being able to

(21) …take *care* of things on her own

(22) *I* can take *care* of things myself

and therefore choosing not to include others in her decision.

"Timing" Cluster

This cluster houses the words [*baby, having, believe, right*] (see Figure 10). This cluster is small with a low frequency of word occurrence but still significantly clustered. Spatially, the word *believe* is separate from the rest of the words in the cluster suggesting the other three words are the objects of her beliefs. In most cases the word *baby* (*n*=26) is the object to either be disclosed or kept private. In one case however, the respondent is reflecting on her relationship with her biological father as that of being her dad's *baby*. *Having* (*n*=12) is simply the respondent reflecting on "*having* a *baby*" and what the implications of that event are at this time. *Believe* (*n*=9) represents the respondents reflecting on the beliefs of other people in her life, about abortion and how that influenced her decision not to disclose. *Right* (*n* = 17) is the respondents reflecting on the timing of this pregnancy or her rights as a woman.

The major theme behind this cluster is timing and how this was not the *right* time for the respondent to disclose or to have a baby. *Believe, right* and *having* are clustered together and illustrate the respondents reflecting on why it was not the *right* time to disclose her choice to terminate or why it was not the *right* time to have a baby. Respondents discussed issues such as family not being supportive of her decision right now, so they chose not to say anything. Other pregnant women in the respondent's life contributed to her belief that it was not the right time to disclose her pregnancy. One

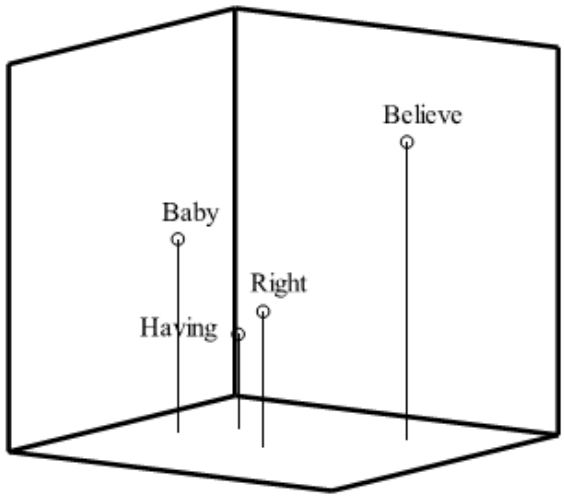

Figure 10 Visual Representation of “Timing” Cluster

woman reported that her younger sister was also currently pregnant and had decided to keep the baby.

(23) …my sister kind of actually the one that is 18 is pregnant *right* now

This particular respondent did not believe her parents could handle another pregnancy disclosure at this time especially since she had chosen to terminate. Each of these respondents reflected on circumstances that led her to avoid disclosing her pregnancy to certain people in her life at this time.

(24) Because father is *having* another *baby right* now with father real girlfriend and I didn't want to ruin anything with them.

Geography played a part in some respondent's decisions as well.

(25) …boyfriend is living up in Arizona and I live in UT and that would be kind of hard for the *baby*.

Relational timing was another reason why some respondents chose not to include certain people in on their decision.

(26) I didn't think our relationship is strong enough *right* now to even comprehend what kind of emotion abortion would bring…

Another respondent reported her relationship not being a good situation for a baby.

(27) At first I wasn't going to abortion but then we would fight constantly so I did want to it is not good for a *baby* because I always hated it when my parent fought and we are both only sixteen…

Whatever the reason, this cluster represents respondents reflecting on the timing of this pregnancy and how it was simply not the right time.

"Nonpartner Relational Risk" Cluster

The next cluster contains the words [*couldn't, hard, decision, thing, family, married, girl*] (see Figure 11). *Couldn't* (*n*=8) is a marker for the people in the respondents life to which she felt she could not disclose. Spatially, this term is separate from the rest of the words in this cluster. *Hard* (*n*=10) in one sense is another word used by the respondents to discuss her belief that now is not the right time to have a baby. Respondents mentioned having a *hard* life or that her current relationship situation would be too *hard* for the baby. Secondly, the word *hard* represents the respondents reflecting on their belief that her choice to terminate would be too difficult to for her family to deal with. One respondent suggested that her decision to abort would devastate her family. *Decision* (*n*=20) is the equivalent of the word abortion (i.e., the decision to terminate). *Thing* (*n*=10) appears as another replacement word for several factors the respondent considered before choosing not to disclose. First of all, *thing* stands for the respondent's belief that her pregnancy was a private matter and therefore not eligible for disclosure (i.e., my *thing*…my decision). Secondly, when reflecting on why a variety of people in her life would not agree with her decision, the word *thing* is a catch all term for issues such as religion or beliefs about abortion and at times premarital sex (i.e., "an LDS" or "Catholic" thing). Lastly, several respondents describe their decision as "the best *thing* to do." *Family* (*n*=28) is the central concept in this cluster and identifies the respondent's family as not safe for disclosure. *Married* (*n*=8) is both an acceptable outcome of the pregnancy that could be disclosed to the family and another taboo element of the respondent's current situation. *Girl* (*n*=12) is an interesting representation of the respondents reflecting on her identity and what this pregnancy says about her (i.e., only

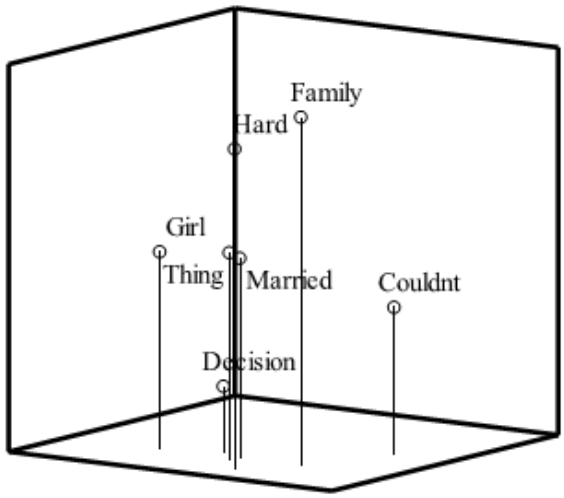

Figure 11 Visual Representation of “Nonpartner Relational Risk” Cluster

bad *girls* do that).

This cluster houses the words respondents used when discussing non-partner relational risks associated with disclosing to her family members. The words *family*, *decision*, and *married* cluster together and represent a central theme of respondents not being able to discuss her decision to terminate. Several respondents identified that they could have talked to their families if they had decided to marry but abortion was too taboo. For example,

(28) With my son, with my daughter parent were incredibly supportive because I was *married*. But that is that whole LDS *thing* again.

(29) I didn't talk to my *family* we were raised LDS, very strict LDS, so you didn't get pregnant unless your *married* and my *family* would not support my *decision* right now at all so I chose not to say anything.

Religious background of the respondent's family came into play frequently. Many respondent's claimed her families religion would keep them from supporting her decision to terminate. Many of the respondents chose not to include their families in on this decision because of the religious values by which they were raised.

(30) Unfortunately I am not going to tell my *family* about abortion because *family* are Catholic and my mother would be against abortion. It's a *family* secret.

Similarly,

(31) My *family* is like, *family* are wonderful people. It is just *family* are Mormon, totally against *family* beliefs. That is probably my most guilty part or

abortion, against beliefs is my most guilty part and I just didn't want to going to abortion with *family*.

(32) My main reason is that abortion would devastate my *family*. I mean that is not the only reason it is just something I would take into consideration. My *family* is perfect LDS and the whole neighborhood is LDS. My grandparent live near by grandparent are always I didn't know my whole *family* is like really, really close and something like this…I didn't know reaction.

Other respondents made the distinction between disclosing about a pregnancy and disclosing about an abortion.

(33) I didn't want to worry *family*. I mean obviously if I kept baby, baby would be a different story but I didn't really see the point of drawing *family* into abortion.

Several respondents discussed their decision with their husbands but refrained from telling either of their birth families. For example,

(34) Husband and I kept abortion between the two of us because abortion was a *decision* that would affect husband and I for the rest of our lives, it was our *decision* and husband and I had to make that *decision*. Yeah, so we just kept abortion between the two of us.

Another respondent feared more than just judgment from her family.

(35) I didn't want *family* to try and make the *decision* for me. When I was pregnant with my first son I was fifteen and we were thinking about adoption and my mother in law kind of said no we can't do that stuff like that so I just didn't want this to turn into a similar…

In addition to family religious values, some respondents reported other family issues and difficult times as contributing to their decision not to disclose.

(36) I didn't really have a lot of people that I can talk to. Like my *family*, my sister kind of actually the one that is 18 is pregnant right now and sister just became pregnant and I just think … I *couldn't* talk to my *family* and be able to I didn't think *family* would have been a supportive environment for me because I saw how *hard* it was for my parent going through that with sister…

Other respondents also wanted to protect their families from additional stress,

(37) I didn't want to worry *family*.

In short, respondents believed that knowledge of her termination would be too much stress for her family to deal with.

"Firsts" Cluster

This cluster contains the words [*feel, first, people, sister, supportive*] (see Figure 12). *Feel* (*n*=12) is the respondent reflecting not only on how she views herself and what disclosing might do to her various relationships, but also how others would view her if they knew she had terminated (i.e., not feeling like a "good girl"). Similar to previous clusters, the word feel is spatially separate from the rest of the cluster and represents a central concept. *First* (*n*=12) is the same word, with similar implications to the *first* that appeared in research question number one. *First* is talking about firsts in the respondent's life: first pregnancy, first abortion, first grandchild, etc. It was these first experiences that fed the respondent decision not to disclose to certain people in their lives. *People* (*n*= 9)

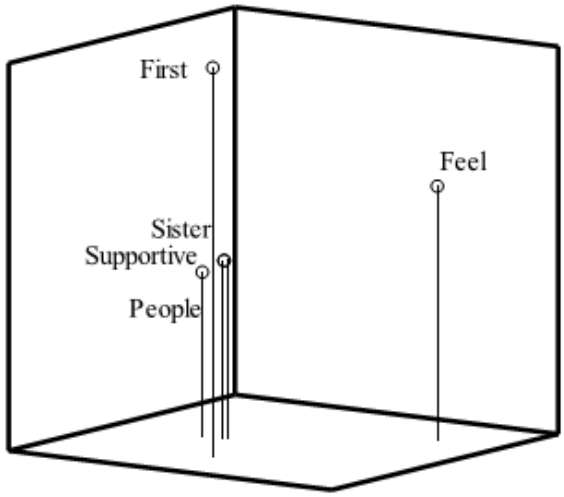

Figure 12 Visual Representation of “Firsts” Cluster

is a global term used to identify individuals who do not support the choice to terminate. *Sister* (*n*=37) is a reference to the respondent's biological sister as someone she wishes she could have talked to about her pregnancy. *Supportive* (*n*=11) appears with two themes from the data. First, respondents are discussing other decisions she has made that other people were supportive of (i.e., marriage or first abortion). Secondly, the term supportive discusses the negative side of disclosure (i.e., not a *supportive* environment).

Sister and *supportive* are the central concepts in this cluster and link to respondents discussing other firsts with her *sister*.

(38) I didn't know what *sister* reaction was going to be but we are really close so I think *sister* should know. Because I had never tell *sister* about the *first* abortion because I was away and I really didn't want *sister* to know about that.

(39) Well usually we can talk to each other about anything. I have had a prior abortion, *sister* was really *supportive* in *first* abortion. This time *sister* is not being extremely *supportive*. I didn't blame *sister, sister* didn't *feel* good about abortion.

Not having a supportive environment in which to disclose was a common reason among respondents for keeping their termination private. In some cases, sisters were not directly involved but their situation contributed to the respondent's belief that she could not disclose.

(40) I didn't really have a lot of *people* that I can talk to. Like my family my *sister* kind of actually the one that is eighteen is pregnant right now and *sister* just became pregnant and I just think I couldn't talk to my family and

be able to I didn't think family would have been a *supportive* environment for me because I saw how hard it was for my parent going through that with *sister*…

Other firsts were identified as being relevant to the respondent's decision not to disclose to certain people in her life.

(41) When I was pregnant with my *first* son I was fifteen and we were thinking about adoption and my mother in law kind of said no we cant do that stuff like that so I just didn't want this to turn into a similar situation

(42) *first* time this happened and dad reaction was you're going to kill an innocent baby?

This text provides excellent examples of how first disclosure encounters informed the respondent's current decision not to disclose.

The data identify *feel* as another important term. Respondents used this term to identify how disclosing to certain people in their lives would make them feel based on what it might do to others impression of her.

(43) I didn't want to talk to parent so because I would *feel* like pregnant would be another disappointment and I didn't want to *feel* like I am disappointing dad. Even though dad may not be disappointed in me that is how I *feel*…

Impression management appears to be an underlying theme in several of the clusters. In the current cluster respondents are discussing her feeling in relation to managing her impression with other people in her life.

(44) I *feel* really close to parent and it is really important to me that they are satisfied with what I am doing and so I just didn't want to…

Another respondent discussed wanting to protect her father's impression of her, avoid negative repercussions and protect her dad from being harmed by her decision.

(45) I didn't want dad to *feel* disappointed in me pretty much. And because dad loves dad grandson so much I know dad probably would have want another grandchild right no but dad would have lectured me on we are not financially ready so I didn't *feel* like I would tell dad about a pregnant unless I know I was keeping baby because abortion would hurt dad as well.

Lastly, respondents identified that discussing abortion, or other taboo subjects, would just be too uncomfortable.

(46) No. I wouldn't talk to my dad about anything like abortion. I would *feel* funny.

"Consequences" Cluster

This cluster contains the words [*down, roommate, never, friend, kids, life*] (see Figure 13). *Down* (*n*=8) is primarily the respondents projecting negative affect from certain people in her life. "Because I didn't want to let parent *down*" is one example. *Roommate* (*n*=8) is another nonpartner relational marker. The word *never* (*n*=16) represents certain absolutes related to their current relationship or this pregnancy. For example, "I would *never* tell dad anything" or "I would *never* be able to give it up" and "sex was just *never* mentioned." *Friend* (*n*=22) is yet another nonpartner relational marker used as the respondent distinguishes between friends she could disclose to and friends with whom she decided not to discuss her termination. *Kids* (*n*=9) is the respondent discussing the children she already has, or what the future would hold if she

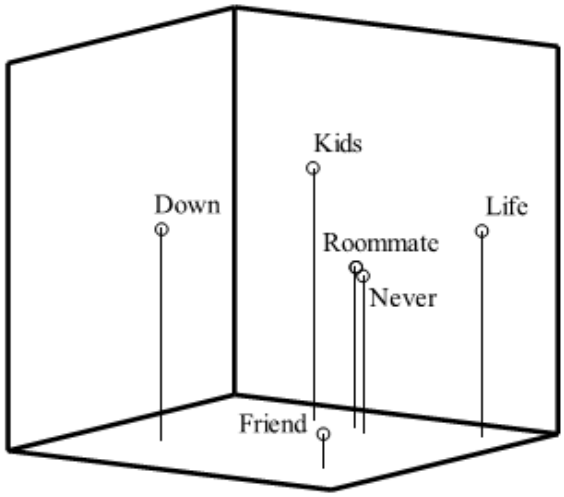

Figure 13 Visual Representation of “Consequences” Cluster

had not made the decision to terminate. *Life* (*n*=10) is simply reflecting on her life and the impact that this pregnancy would have.

Kids and *life* are closely connected in the current cluster and suggest that respondents were considering the future consequences of having a child at this time. For example several respondents claimed,

(47) …because when you are young when you have your *kids* it just messes up you *life*.

One respondent was reflecting on the differences between her life and her mother's life and how these differences would keep her mother from accepting her decision to terminate.

(48) Um the situation of mom maybe not understanding. It is a little bit more of an old school and close minded. Mom has *never* had to do anything alone, mom has had a partner mom comes from "Cleaverville" and everything is great and there is a white picket fence and the *kids* going to school and come home. Mom didn't have an idea oh how hard my *life* is. So in mom perspective I would be making the biggest mistake in my *life*…

Previous clusters have identified that many respondents chose to terminate based on not wanting to cement a relationship with her current partner. The combination of the words *kids* and *life* provides additional support for this sentiment. One respondent discovered that she was pregnant shortly after discovering that her boyfriend had been unfaithful.

(49) Because boyfriend want to have *kids* really bad and I just didn't think that I could have *kids* with boyfriend and live a *life* with boyfriend after this.

Other respondents reflected on the experiences of their friends when making the decision to terminate the current pregnancy.

(50) I was scared about how partner would react because my *friend*, I have a lot of *friend* that are single mothers that are raising their *kids* now where they think that Mr. Right turned out to be Mr. Wrong as soon as found out boyfriend had to pay child support.

The word *friend* figures prominently in this cluster as respondents reflect on the experiences of their friends as well as identifying certain friends in their lives that would not be supportive of their decision to terminate or would not protect the information. The text illuminates that this is a qualitatively different kind of *friend* than those identified in research question number one.

(51) I didn't feel like it was any of *friend* business for the mere fact that most of my *friend* are my same age and we all know how 19 year old girls are. If I would have tell *friend* what was going on and that I was having an abortion that would have flew around the whole city that I live in within a day. It is sad that you cant trust your *friend*…

(52) Well a couple of my *friend* but most of *friend* wouldn't approve of abortion so I didn't say anything.

or

(53) Well I have *friend* that I would have liked to talk to but I didn't think they would just not approve.

Respondents occasionally considered the experiences of their friends when it came to talking to their parents about taboo topics.

(54) Sex was just *never* mentioned at all. No I just *never* think of approaching because parent *never*, I didn't know my *friend* would always say their parent would tell *friend* and talk to *friend* and stuff but my parent *never* did.

(55) No parent *never* said it wasn't ok but it was *never* something that was discussed.

Lastly, the religion of certain friends kept respondents from disclosing about her termination.

(56) My *roommate* is a born again Christian. *Roommate* didn't believe in having sex before marriage. *Roommate* is forty years old, which is fine I guess and *roommate* wouldn't accept abortion very well. *Roommate* is not a very open person *roommate* is very closed off so I wouldn't even think about telling *roommate*. I wouldn't talk to *roommate* about personal things.

Similarly,

(57) And then also probably the *friend* I am more open with *friend* religion didn't agree with my decision so I didn't want to make *friend* uncomfortable.

This particular quote illustrates the notion that some taboo topics are too taboo even for friends with whom respondents were normally open.

Although the word *down* appears in a variety of contexts, its presence in this cluster represents respondents projecting the negative affect of others.

(58) Because I didn't want to let parent *down* because so far parents have been proud of me because I have been good and like a lot of my *friend* ended up getting pregnant young…

Along those lines, other respondents believed they couldn't disclose to certain people for fear that the recipient of the disclosure would believe they had let the respondent *down*.

(59) Mom would have freaked out but mom is really protective of me and I am protective of mom and anything that happens to me mom feels like mom lets me *down*…so sometimes better you just don't tell everything.

Lastly, the word *down* in this cluster refers to an anticipated response from respondent's boyfriends. For example, one respondent decided not to discuss her pregnancy with her boyfriend because,

(60) I didn't think boyfriend would jump up and *down* for joy but I didn't think that boyfriend would react as bad as boyfriend did. We had planned on getting married and have *kids* and if *kids* came before marriage that was fine.

Although this particular respondent disclosed her pregnancy to her boyfriend, his negative response, and rapid departure from her life, made discussion of options impossible. Other respondents used the word *down* to describe their actions or the actions of others.

(61) Father *never* returned any of my calls for a week so I just tracked father *down* basically because I wasn't going to do abortion without talking to father, I didn't think it was fair.

Relating to potentially very serious consequences of revealing taboo information, other respondents feared for their safety and therefore chose not to discuss the pregnancy with their boyfriend.

(62) I know if I tell boyfriend I was pregnant boyfriend would have stopped me and hunted me *down*.

"Parents" Cluster

The words contained in this cluster [*dad, mom, parent, pregnant, talk*] (see Figure 14) are the most straightforward and represent respondents reflecting on all of the reasons why she chose not to disclose to her *dad* (*n* = 53), her *mom* (*n* = 73) or the combination of the two of them (*parent*, *n* = 43). *Pregnant* (*n* = 37) is the taboo topic to be avoided and *talk* (*n* = 31) represents the act of disclosing. Interestingly, the word *dad* is spatially distanced from the words *mom, parent, pregnant*, and *talk*. Analysis of the parents cluster suggests that "dads" were treated separately from *mom* and *parent* and entirely excluded from disclosure.

The word *talk* clusters closely with each of the relationship markers housed in this cluster (*dad, mom, parent*). In this text respondents are identifying all of the reasons she chose not to talk to her biological parents.

(63) Because I was scared. *Mom* and my *dad* they still I don't know they look at me like I am still their little girl. *Parent* can't even deal with me having a boyfriend and all of the sudden I going up to them hey I am *pregnant*…

(64) I won't say a word to *mom*. If *mom* know I was here right now *mom* would have a cow.

(65) …it's not that I couldn't have went to my *parent* but at that point and time I just didn't think I could. Today I think I could and I could actually going to *parent* with abortion and *parent* would not agree and I know that with

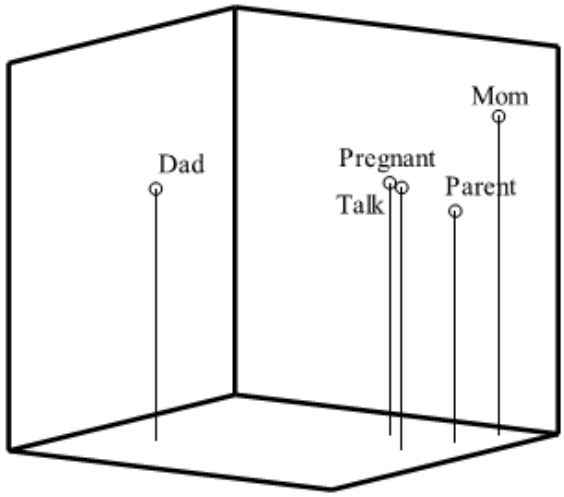

Figure 14 Visual Representation of “Parents” Cluster

my mind and heart but *parent* probably I didn't know *parent* would try to *talk* me out of ever throwing baby away I didn't know that *parent* would actually support but *parent* won't turn me away either. And that is basically how *parent* have always been I just choose not to put *parent* in that situation sit there and pretend I was a good little girl.

(66) I didn't want to *talk* to *parent* so because I would feel like *pregnant* would be another disappointment and I didn't want to feel like I am disappointing *dad*.

(67) I didn't tell *parent* because I already know what I was going to abortion and I didn't want to have to worry *parent* with abortion and my *mom* is very opinionated about this subject.

(68) No. I wouldn't *talk* to my *dad* about anything like abortion. I would feel funny.

(69) Because my *mom* didn't like my partner right now. *mom* is very *mom* just didn't *mom* is not one of those *mom* who gets excited…

(70) Well I want to tell my *dad* but I felt like *dad* might like try to help me decide what to do and I think that this wasn't something that *dad* should have to live with forever so I didn't want anybody I *talk* as few.

It was not uncommon for respondents to discuss being able to talk to their moms but not their dads.

(71) Well I *talk* to my *mom* about abortion and *mom* is awesome and *mom* has been there. *Mom* got *pregnant* with all sorts of contraceptives and been *pregnant* several times as well, three time exactly. I kinda waited a little

because I was a little embarrassed I guess you could say because abortion happened again so but I didn't tell my *dad* because I tell *dad* the first time this happened and *dad* reaction was you're going to kill an innocent baby? So didn't need to tell *dad*.

Similarly,

(72) …my *dad*, we are real close and I could *talk* to my *mom* too but I couldn't *talk* to my *dad. Dad* would say that is sad.

Other respondents reported only being able to talk to one parent but only at the end of their lives.

(73) Maybe on *mom* deathbed. Abortion is very wrong. The first thing my *dad* asked me when I tell *dad* I was pregnant with my son was you didn't get an abortion did you?

Some of the younger respondents described not necessarily wanting to talk to her parents but believing she did not have a choice.

(74) My *mom* notice something wrong because I was just crying all day long and so *mom* goes what's wrong and *mom* said are you crying about your boyfriend again? No. Are you crying about this and that? I'm like what is the worst thin that can happen to a girl when she is this young? And *mom* said my God, you're pregnant. I didn't want to *tell dad* I *tell mom* to *tell* my *dad*. I didn't know, I was embarrassed. I was scared what *parent* were going to do or say but if I didn't tell *parent* I didn't know I could get an abortion without *parent*.

Several respondents stated that they could not talk to either parent because they knew that parent would talk to the other parent and therefore could not be trusted to keep this taboo information private.

(75) Well, every time I went to my *mom, mom* would *talk* to my *dad*.

Many of the respondents focused on one parent and all the reasons they couldn't disclose to them. Family circumstances kept many of the respondent's from involving their parents. For example,

(76) ...*mom* has already been through this with my brother and sister so then I am her youngest one and *mom* will start blaming herself for it because all three of us had sex and…

Pregnant siblings came up several times as a reason for not disclosing to parents. One respondent discussed her younger sister being pregnant and her older sister getting married at the same time she became pregnant.

(77) With me I just think that *parent* have my sister is getting married on Thursday, *parent* just have way too much and my *mom* just can't handle any more and I saw how hard it was with *mom* with Candace and it was just really, really difficult for *mom* to get through that and I think *mom* struggles with a lot of depression as it is.

Finally, her parent's religious, political and cultural beliefs figured prominently into respondent's decisions to disclose or not to disclose. Married respondents described keeping the decision to terminate between her and her husband also because of parent's religious beliefs.

(78) …the one person I think about going to was my *mom* but my religion didn't permit abortion what I have just done. *Mom* is very, very Catholic.

Other statements such as

(79) …my *parent* are both incredibly LDS

and

(80) I didn't need to tell *parent*. With my son, with my daughter *parent* were incredibly supportive because I was married but that is that whole LDS thing again

illustrate a common sentiment among respondents; parents would not support her decision to terminate based on their religious beliefs. Similarly, respondents commented on parents political beliefs as a reason not to disclose,

(81) …because my *dad* is extremely conservative and *dad* think sex is something that goes on when you're married.

Lastly, cultural beliefs were a concern for many respondents.

(82) I just felt, I mean Hispanics believe what their *parent* say and I just didn't want *parent* to be disappointed in me.

Overall, this cluster is representative of respondents reflecting on situations and people who were too risky to disclose to about their decision to terminate a pregnancy. Specifically, the respondent's parents are singled out as too risky for disclosure about this taboo topic. Respondents relied on knowledge of their parents beliefs, attitudes and values to discern that they would not be supportive of her decision to terminate.

Qualitative Textual Analysis of Research Question One

The second phase of analysis utilized a qualitative textual analysis in order to answer the question of "why" respondents chose their confidants (see Figure 15). In phase one, CATPAC was used to identify clusters of meaning out of a large amount of text. Those same clusters were then analyzed to extract the rules for disclosure respondents relied upon when making their disclosure decisions. Each research question and cluster will be discussed in turn.

"Girlfriend" Cluster

As discussed in the previous CATPAC analysis, this cluster houses a discussion of respondents choosing to disclose her current situation to a specific girlfriend in her life. Relevant to this phase of analysis is why the respondent chose this girlfriend as opposed to another? Through text analysis, four categories of rules for disclosure were extracted and coded. The categories are history, previous experience, personal qualities and reciprocity. Each category will be discussed using the text from respondent interviews.

History

When asked why she had chosen to speak to this particular girlfriend, as opposed to another, respondents frequently discussed having a history with her chosen confidant. Some statements suggested a communication history that had involved a discussion of taboo topics.

(1) We talk about everything

(2) Has kept previous secrets

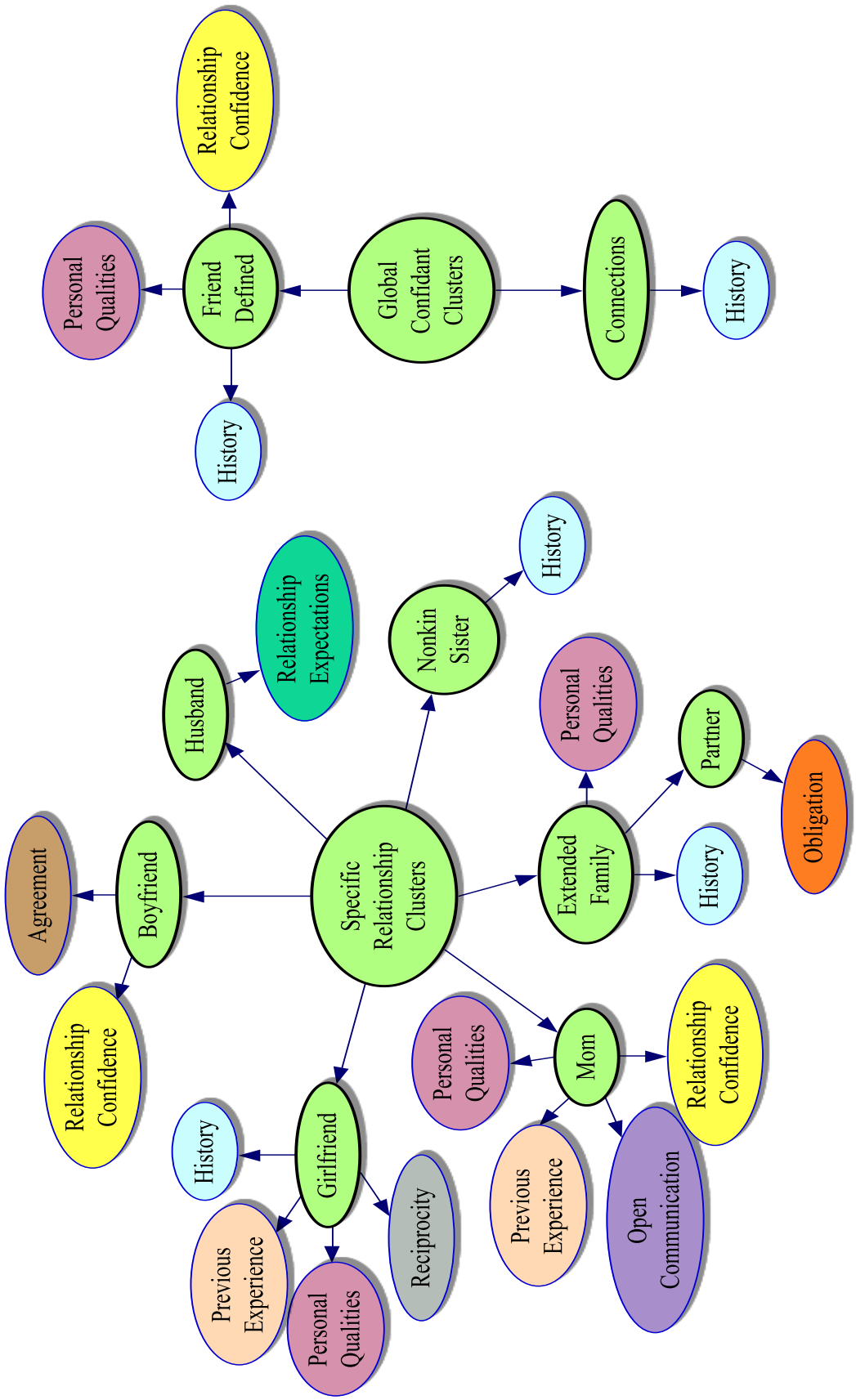

Figure 15 Visual Mapping of Research Question Number One Clusters and Rules for Disclosure

(3) Knows me so well

While other statements reflected a history of stress on the relationship with positive outcomes.

(4) Been through a lot together

Reflected in each of these statements is an implication of the respondent being able to rely on a proven history with this girlfriend when making disclosure decisions about her choice to terminate a pregnancy. It appears a history of trust had been built over time.

Previous Experience

In addition to a relational history with their girlfriend, many respondents sought out confidants who had previous experience with pregnancy, abortion or raising children. Statements such as,

(5) She has kids

(6) She is also pregnant

(7) She has had an abortion

were common reasons given when asked why a respondent chose to speak to this particular girlfriend. As mentioned earlier, confiding in an individual with previous experience not only lessens the risks associate with disclosing a taboo topic but also allowed the respondents to acquire logistical information about her choices (i.e., abortion, raising children, pregnancy, etc.).

Personal Qualities

The next category of rules for disclosure involved a number of adjectives being offered as a reason for choosing to disclose to a particular girlfriend. Adjectives included,

(8) Understanding

(9) Supportive

(10) Trusted

(11) Won't judge

(12) Not opinionated

(13) Comfortable

Clearly, these are all positive descriptions of personal qualities possessed by respondent's confidants. When asked why she chose to disclose to this particular girlfriend these adjectives were offered as support for the respondent's choice, providing evidence for the personal qualities rule enactment.

Reciprocity

Lastly, respondents offered statements implying reciprocity in their relationships with their confidant. It was common for respondents to describe situations in the past where her confidant had disclosed a taboo topic to her or had sought her out for help in a situation very similar to the one the respondents was currently facing. For example,

(14) She tells me things and I tell her things

(15) I helped her with her pregnancy

(16) She came to me years ago when she was considering an abortion

This type of reciprocity in the relationship lessened the risk of disclosing a taboo topic to this particular girlfriend.

"Boyfriend" Cluster

Relationship Confidence

As stated previously, 21 of the 60 women interviewed chose to speak to boyfriends (e.g., the biological father) first. When asked "why" two very clear clusters of disclosure rules emerged. First, respondents expressed confidence in the relationship they had with their boyfriend.

(17) We are really close

(18) I am comfortable talking to him

(19) I can trust him

(20) He likes me no matter what

Statements such as these suggest that respondents were not concerned about damaging the relationship with their boyfriend by disclosing taboo information to him. Confidence in the relationship had been established and made the boyfriend a safe choice for disclosure.

Agreement

In addition to confidence in the relationship, respondents who chose to speak to their boyfriends first discussed an awareness that her boyfriend would not disagree with her decision to terminate. His agreement therefore constitutes a rule for disclosure. For example,

(21) He feels the same way I do

(22) He know I don't want kids

and,

(23) He know that I don't want to have his children right now

suggests that respondents had previously discussed their feelings regarding pregnancy and abortion with their boyfriends and were confident that he would support her choice.

"Extended Family" Cluster

History

CATPAC analysis identified a number of extended family relationships as being sought out for disclosure by respondents. Those relationships included aunts, grandmothers, ex-husbands, partners and girlfriend's parents. The rules for disclosure in this cluster were very similar to the rules described in the girlfriend cluster. For example, respondents discussed having a positive history with this individual that encouraged her to seek them out when she discovered she was pregnant. Statements such as,

(24) Has always been there for me

(25) Has helped me previously

or,

(26) Helped my cousin

were offered as justification for their disclosure choice.

Personal Qualities

Also similar to the disclosure rules extracted from the girlfriend cluster is a discussion of personal qualities possessed by the extended family members who were sought out for help. Personal qualities in this cluster included,

(27) Doesn't hold grudges

(28) Very understanding

(29) Makes me feel comfortable

(30) Really open

(31) Helpful

(32) Runs a pharmacy

Similar to the girlfriends, these extended family members had displayed certain characteristics that let the respondent's know they were good disclosure choices.

Obligation

One relationship identified in the extended family cluster fell into a category all its own and had a separate set of rules for disclosure. CATPAC specifically identified the respondent's partner in this cluster and through textual analysis a very different set of disclosure rules emerged. Statements such as,

(33) He is the father

(34) He has the right to know

(35) He will get over it

suggest the respondents felt a sense of obligation to disclose to the biological father. This is distinctly different from the rules identified in the boyfriend cluster. When the term partner was used, respondents were not concerned about his agreeing with her or the relationship being damaged. She simply felt obligated to inform him of her decision to terminate.

"Mom" Cluster

Previous Experience

Rules for disclosure identified when the respondent's mom was her chosen confidant are very similar to those described in the girlfriend cluster. Respondents who chose to disclose to their moms first described being aware that they had previous experience with abortions and pregnancy. For example,

(36) Mom has had abortion(s)

(37) Mom got pregnant when she was young

(38) Mom would know how I feel

Respondents knowledge of their mothers previous experience with pregnancy and abortion also lends support to another rule for disclosure extracted from the mom cluster; that of open communication.

Open Communication

Respondents who chose to disclose to their mothers first described past discussion about taboo topics with them. Specific examples include,

(39) Mom talked to me about abortion

(40) Mom talked to me about birth control

or a more general communication openness as implied by the following statements,

(41) Mom told me I could talk to her about anything

(42) Mom told me she would always be there for me

At first, these statements seemed to mirror the rule of reciprocity described in the girlfriend cluster. However, comments in the mom cluster suggested not necessarily a "tit for tat" sense of reciprocity but more a general openness and willingness to discuss taboo

topics within the relationship. The above statements are not specifically tied to an event in the respondent's life but more a sense of general communication openness in the relationship between mother and daughter.

Relationship Confidence and Personal Qualities

Next, respondents who chose to disclose to their mothers first described relationship confidence as a rule in her decision to confide in her mother. Statements such as,

(43) Me and Mom are way close

(44) Mom loves me

and,

(45) Mom is my friend

were all offered as justification for trusting mom with taboo information. Additionally, respondent's described personal qualities possessed by their mothers that encouraged them to disclose to her. Adjectives describing mom include,

(46) Understanding

(47) Never judges

were frequently used to describe the moms who were sought out for disclosure by respondents.

"Nonkin Sister" Cluster

History

As discussed in the CATPAC analysis, this cluster houses respondent discussion about her best friend or a biological sister who is "like a best friend." The text in this

cluster shows respondent's mixing relational labels as justification for why this individual was safe for disclosure. When extracted from the text, it appears that the respondent's willingness to apply a different label to this individual is reason enough to justify disclosure because the label houses all of the necessary rules for disclosure. If the confidant was the respondent's biological sister, textual examples include,

(48) My sister is like my best friend

(49) We are close like best friends

(50) My sister is my best friend

Respondents are reinforcing their disclosure choices by stating their confidant possess all of the qualities of a best friend. Whereas if the confidant was not a biological sister, respondents used the label of sister to suggest that the relationship possessed stronger ties than could be expressed by the label of best friend. For example,

(51) We are close like sisters

(52) My best friend is like a sister to me

By mixing the labels used to describe their confidant, respondents are implying that these labels embody the necessary rules for disclosure of a taboo topic. While difficult to code this particular set of rules, the bonds described by respondents suggests a history with their confidant that encouraged them to use different labels to describe the relationship.

"Husband" Cluster

Relationship Qualities

This CATPAC cluster is small in terms of concepts but powerful in terms of implications. The respondents who chose to confide in their husbands first did so because of relational qualities or expectations one would expect to find in a marriage. When asked

why they spoke to their husbands first, respondents described relational qualities rather than their husbands personal qualities. Relationship qualities identified were

(53) Trust

(54) Respect

(55) Support

and ultimately,

(56) Agreement

As was pointed out previously, respondents in this cluster were the only women who described a decision to be made and seeking out their husbands for help in making that decision (as opposed to being obligated to inform him of her decision). Conceivably, the rules for disclosure in this case were the relational expectations established by the marriage.

"Friend Defined" Cluster

Relationship Confidence

This cluster shows respondents engaging in a more global description of what qualities are included in the label of "friend." These qualities are general descriptions of the disclosure rules being applied to distinguish a friend that is a safe for disclosing a taboo topic. First, the rule of relationship confidence was categorized from the text:

(57) A good friend will be there for me

(58) Good friend support you

(59) Good friend offered previous support

These general statements about what friends do mirrors the previous discussions of what it means to be a friend and why this particular friend was sought out for disclosure of a taboo topic.

Personal Qualities

Similarly, the global discussion of friend identified a necessary personal quality when making disclosure decisions. Specifically,

(60) A friend would understand

(61) Friend is a good help

(62) Friend will stand by you no matter what

History

Last, the use of the friend label implies history or a sense of longevity to the relationship as evidenced by statements such as,

(63) We have been friends for a long time

(64) She has been my friend since elementary school

(65) We have been friends since junior high

It is important to note here that each of the rule for disclosure categories discussed in this cluster mirror and provide support for the more specific categories discussed previously.

"Connections" Cluster

History

Finally, the connections cluster shows respondents describing how they are connected to their chosen confidant as justification for why they believed this individual

was a safe disclosure choice. When asked why they chose this particular person for disclosure, respondents described logistic connections such as

(66) Working together

(67) Living together

or more interpersonal connections like having,

(68) Gone through a lot together

(69) Been through a lot together over past four years

or not wanting to

(70) Hide things from each other

Clearly respondents considered their connection to this individual when making a disclosure decision.

Qualitative Textual Analysis of Research Question Two

While the first research question asked respondents to identify the reasons why they chose certain people in their lives to disclose to, the second research question is asking them to identify the reasons why other relationships in their lives were actively excluded from disclosure of a taboo topic (see Figure 16). As was pointed out earlier, the CATPAC analysis of research question one resulted in the majority of clusters identifying a specific relationship being identified, the exact opposite phenomenon resulted for research question two. Here, with one exception, clusters centered on circumstances, conditions or global categories of people in the respondents lives that were unsuitable for disclosure of a taboo topic. As with the previous textual analysis of research question one, clusters will be broken down into categories of reasons why respondents actively chose not to disclose and coded.

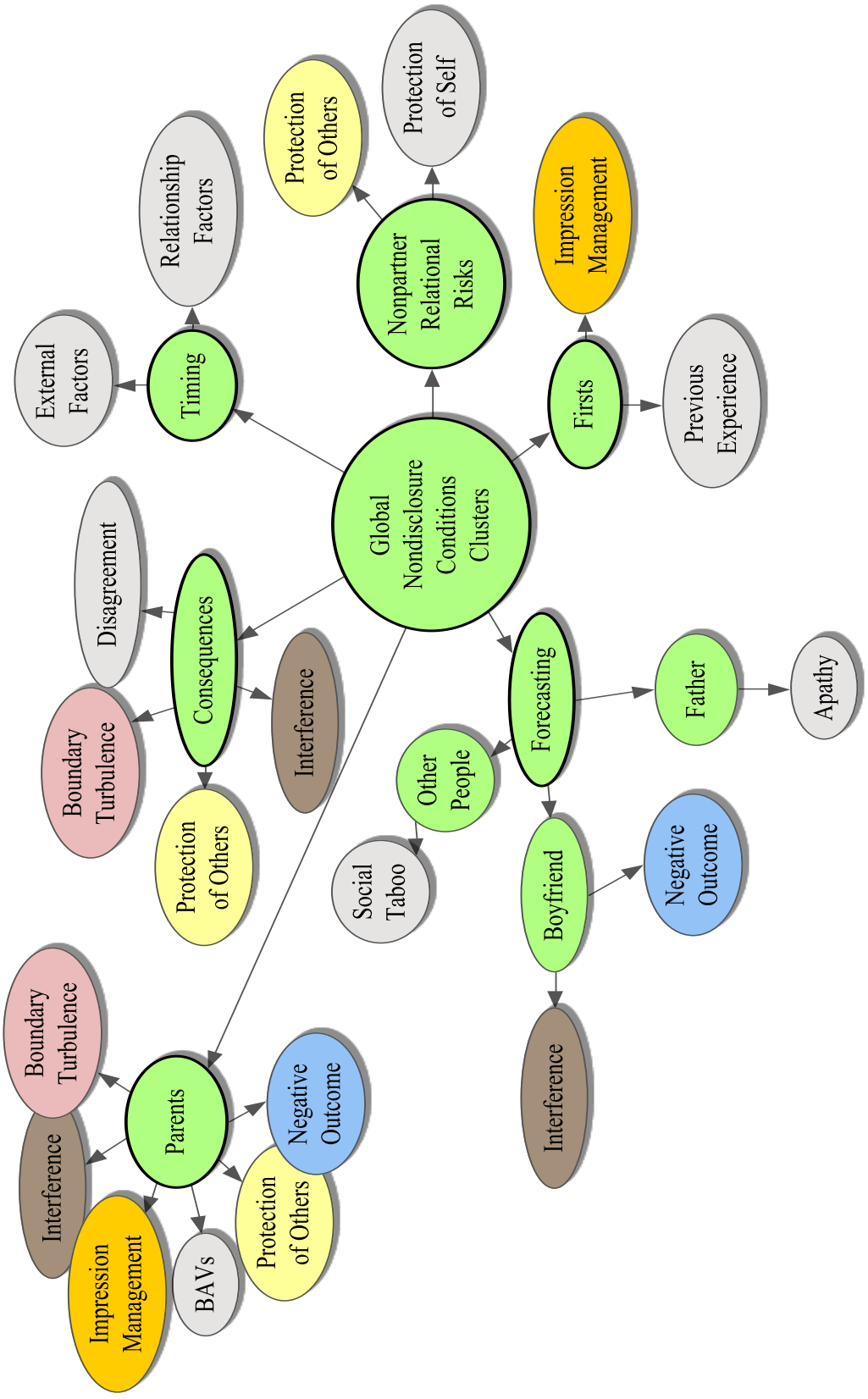

Figure 16 Visual Mapping of Research Question Number Two Clusters and Rules for Nondisclosure

"Forecasting" Cluster

Father and Negative Outcome

While this cluster represents respondents predicting negative reactions from people in her life, close textual analysis reveals three specific relationships being identified; the biological father of the baby, her boyfriend or simply "other people." Each of these relationship labels came with its own rules for nondisclosure. For example, the biological father of many respondents was not disclosed to because of a perceived negative outcome. For example statements such as,

(1) Baby would connect me to father

(2) Boyfriend would want the kid

(3) Would not want father involved in my life

(4) Father would freak out

or,

(5) I know his reaction

illustrate respondent's fear of a bond she did not want or simply not wanting to deal with a negative reaction from her partner.

Father and Apathy

Apathy toward the father's response is also offered as a reason for nondisclosure. This absence of concern or connection to the father is illustrated by the comments,

(6) Not a relationship

(7) If father had anything to say I didn't care

and,

(8) I didn't care what his reaction was

Overall, the use of the label "father" in this cluster indicated feelings of disconnection or non-inclusion from respondents.

Boyfriend and Negative Outcome

However, a number of respondents actively chose not to disclose to her "boyfriend" even though she perceived herself as being in a relationship with him. Again, it was her predication of a negative outcome that kept her from disclosing her decision to terminate the pregnancy. For example,

(9) I know how boyfriend felt

(10) Boyfriend would have gotten upset

(11) Boyfriend didn't care

and,

(12) Boyfriend not open minded

all indicate the respondent is forecasting a negative outcome from her boyfriend.

Boyfriend and Interference

Furthermore, in direct contradiction to the respondents who chose to disclose to her boyfriend in research question number one, respondents who knew that her boyfriend would not agree with her choice, chose nondisclosure. As indicated by the following comments,

(13) Boyfriend would have stopped me

(14) Boyfriend doesn't believe in abortion

(15) Boyfriend wouldn't accept abortion

and,

(16) Boyfriend would fight my decision

respondents were forecasting more than disagreement from their boyfriends. Their comments indicate that they feared interference from these men and therefore could not risk disclosing them.

Other People and Social Taboo

Lastly, several respondents indicated an awareness of the social taboo surrounding abortion when their forecasting of negative reactions from "other people" constituted a rule for nondisclosure. While the following comments do not identify a specific relationship in the woman's life, they illustrate her awareness that many people would disagree and respond negatively to her choice.

(17) I didn't care what other peoples decision about abortion are

(18) I didn't need other people dogging on me for abortion

(19) A lot of people are critical of abortion and wouldn't agree

"Timing" Cluster

External Factors

This cluster represents respondents reflecting on how the timing of this pregnancy contributed to her decision not to disclose to certain people in her life. Some timing issues were external to the relationship,

(20) Younger sister having baby

(21) Father is having baby with "real" girlfriend

(22) Boyfriend living in AZ

Internal Factors

Other rules for nondisclosure were related directly to the relationship between the respondent and her partner.

(23) Relationship not strong enough to handle this

(24) Not a good situation for a baby

Regardless of whether her reasons were internal or external to the relationship, they contributed to respondent's decision not to disclose.

"**Nonpartner Relational Risks" Cluster**

Protection of Self

The rules for nondisclosure in this cluster focus on the respondent's family and can be broken down into two categories; protection of self or protection of others. Under the category of protection of self, two comments best illustrate why it was in the respondent's best interests to avoid disclosing to her family.

(25) Didn't want family to try and make decision for me

(26) Family supportive of marriage, not this

(27) Dad would tell me I have to get married

Clearly, respondents believe that disclosing to her family would have resulted in damage to her need to make this decision for herself or her family's perceptions of her for choosing to terminate.

Protection of Others

Many respondents established rules for nondisclosure out of their desire to protect the members of her family from the emotional consequences of her choice. Many respondents talked disclosure,

(28) Would devastate family

(29) Abortion is totally against family's beliefs

or that she wanted to spare them from having to worry about her,

(30) Didn't want to worry family

Whether the rule was established out of a concern for self or others, it contributed to respondent's decision to not disclose her decision to terminate to her family.

"Firsts" Cluster

Previous Experience

Textual analysis of this cluster identified rules for nondisclosure based on respondent's previous experience with disclosing taboo information to certain people in her life. If respondents had disclosed to certain people previously and experienced negative consequences, this led to her choice not to disclose to that individual this time. For example,

(31) Dad reacted badly the first time

(32) When I was pregnant with my first son I was fifteen and we were thinking about adoption and my mother in law kind of said no we can't do that stuff like that so I just didn't want this to turn into a similar

(33) The first time this happened and dad reaction was you're going to kill an innocent baby

and,

(34) I tell grandfather about the first abortion a few months after abortion had already been done grandfather just said grandfather was going to pray for me

was reason enough to establish a new rule for nondisclosure this time.

Impression Management

Additionally, textual analysis identified the category of impression management as important when making disclosure choices. Many respondents felt that another taboo disclosure would negatively affect how others perceived them. Specifically statements such as,

(35) Important for parents to be satisfied with me

(36) Only bad girls do that

(37) Because I was my dad's baby. I didn't think dad want to believe that I was having sex

(38) I didn't want family to think I was irresponsible or reckless with my life

and

(39) Didn't want dad to feel disappointed again

indicate that for many respondents another taboo disclosure would be too risky to personal impression management.

"Consequences" Cluster

Through textual analysis of the "consequences" cluster, resulted in four categories of rules for nondisclosure; Interference, protection of other, boundary turbulence and disagreement.

Interference

The category of interference was found in this cluster as well as the forecasting cluster. Text contained within each category shows respondents reflecting on what she believes would have happened if she had disclosed to her boyfriend about being pregnant. Some respondent comment address the risk of her boyfriend not wanting to go along with her decision,

(40) Boyfriend would want to keep the baby

(41) Boyfriend wouldn't accept abortion

while others feared a more violent form of interference. For example,

(42) Boyfriend would have hunted me down

Either response was too risky to include her boyfriend in on her decision to terminate.

Protection of Others

Text suggesting respondents were concerned about protecting others from her choice is also found in the consequences cluster. Examples include,

(43) Didn't want to let parents down

(44) I didn't want to make friend uncomfortable

or,

(45) Mom would feel like she let me down

Disagreement

Additionally, respondent's rules for nondisclosure were formed by knowledge that certain people in her life disagreed with her decision to terminate and were therefore unsuitable for disclosure. Comments such as,

(46) Roommate not open

(47) Roommate doesn't believe in sex before marriage

(48) Friend wouldn't approve

(49) Mom not understanding

are indications that knowledge of disagreement was a careful consideration before disclosing taboo information.

Boundary Turbulence

Finally, respondents addressed issues of boundary turbulence when making disclosure decisions. For example,

(50) 19 year old female friends would blab

(51) Boyfriend would want to tell dad and dad would kill boyfriend

(52) My family is perfect LDS and the whole neighborhood is LDS. My grandparent live nearby grandparent and are always here, I didn't want my whole family and everyone to know

illustrates that confidants who were perceived as not willing or able to protect taboo disclosures were ruled out.

"Parents" Cluster

The final cluster identified during the CATPAC analysis clearly identifies respondent's parents being unsuitable for abortion disclosure. Additionally, textual analysis extracted five categories of rules for nondisclosure as support for why respondents avoided disclosing to her parents.

Beliefs, Attitudes and Values

First, when asked why she chose not to disclose to her parents, many respondent's discussed knowledge of her parents beliefs, attitudes and values (BAVs) that made disclosing to them a risky choice. Text examples include discussions of religion,

(53) Mom is very catholic

(54) Parents incredibly LDS

(55) Parents would support marriage but not abortion

politics,

(56) Dad is very conservative

and culture.

(57) Based on our culture, parents would be very disappointed

Negative Outcomes

Additionally, respondents feared a variety of negative outcomes resulting from disclosing her choice to her parents. For example,

(58) Mom would have a "cow"

(59) Dad reacted negatively the first time

(60) Dad would react badly

(61) Mom is very opinionate about abortion

Impression Management

While damaging her parent's perception of her could be seen as a negative outcome, this was a major concern for many respondents and necessitated its own category. Impression management was extracted as a rule for disclosure in this cluster as well as the "firsts" cluster. Text examples include:

(62) They [parents] still look at me like I'm a little girl

(63) Pregnancy would be another disappointment

(64) I feel like I am disappointing dad

(65) I would feel funny talking to dad

Protection of Others

Respondents who chose not to disclose to their parents also talked about how this information would negatively affect them. Statements such as,

(66) Didn't want to put parents in that situation

(67) Didn't want to worry parents

(68) Dad shouldn't have to live with this forever

(69) Mom would blame herself

(70) Parents have too much going on

and,

(71) Parents can't even deal with me having a boyfriend

are all examples of respondent's desire to protect her parents from taboo information.

Interference

Other reasons respondents chose not to disclose to her parents were categories similar to those addressed in other clusters. Respondents mentioned that if she told her parents that she was going to terminate a pregnancy, they would interfere in her decision. For example,

(72) Parents would try to talk me out of it

(73) In mom perspective I would be making the biggest mistakes in my life

(74) dad would tell me that I needed to either marry this person

or,

(75) Dad would try to help me decide

indicate that any perceived interference from parents or boyfriends resulted in nondisclosure.

Boundary Turbulence

Finally, while a number of women discussed wishing they could have disclosed to their moms about being pregnant, boundary turbulence prevented them from doing so.

(76) Mom would talk to dad

(77) I could talk to my mom too but I couldn't talk to my dad, dad would say that is sad and mom would talk to dad

was a great enough risk, that respondents chose not to talk to either parent.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

In order to study how and why respondents made their disclosure choices, the current study is based on the theoretical foundation of Communication Privacy Management (Petronio, 2002). Taboo topics present unique challenges to disclosers given the enhanced risk to self and the relationship. Whereas less taboo topics can rely on cultural and social conventions of disclosure, the current study suggests highly taboo abortion disclosures must also rely on rules developed through previous interactions with potential confidants. Therefore, when a taboo topic is involved, the individual proceeds through a heightened process of deciding whether to reveal or conceal this information to others. CPM is particularly well suited to studying the disclosure of taboo topics for three reasons. First, CPM gives priority to private information rather than the discloser. Topics, which are taboo by nature, present unique disclosure challenges to the individuals involved. Given the controversial nature of abortion in the United States, avenues for disclosure that these respondents may have normally sought out could have been too risky. The nature of the topic impacts the decision of whether to reveal or conceal and CPM allows researchers to take that into account.

Secondly, the dialectical approach of CPM allows researchers to address the processes "behind" the acts of disclosure as well as nondisclosure (i.e. the public vs. private dialectic). When individuals go through the cognitively complex process of

balancing the benefits and consequences of disclosing information about the self, it is equally important to understand the reasons why some relationships are considered safe while others are not. Studying both processes gives insight into the relationship qualities and previous interactions individuals take into consideration before sharing private information.

Finally, CPM provides a three-step process which theoretically frames the process underlying all disclosure decisions. The first step deals with how individuals develop rules for disclosure. CPM argues that individuals develop their privacy rules using a variety of criteria from their lives (Petronio, 2002). These five criteria include culture, gender, motivations, context, and risk-benefit ratio. Culture and gender represent criteria external to the relationship and are less relevant to the current study. However, motivations and risk-benefit ratio represent internal cognitive structures respondents reflected upon and identified through qualitative interviews. Research questions one and two, asked respondents to identify how they had developed criteria for both the individuals they chose to disclose to and those with whom they chose to remain silent. Respondents discussed how previous relational interaction gave them the necessary assurance or caution when choosing a confidant. Rules for disclosure were then extracted through a semantic analysis of respondent descriptions rather than relying on researcher identification of the rules.

The second step in this process involves what Petronio (2002) calls "boundary coordination." Confidants are chosen based on the discloser's perception that they will both respect and protect the information. Boundaries can be modified based on the nature of the information and whether or not the confidant meets expectations. In the current

study, respondents described previous interactions where confidants did or did not meet expectations. Those interactions helped to develop rules for future disclosures.

The third step in the boundary management process allows for the system to evolve and change based on topic and experience, etc. Individuals simultaneously manage their own privacy boundaries as well as the collective privacy boundaries of others therefore, it is reasonable for "turbulence" to occur when people misunderstand their role in co-ownership of information and violate expectations. CPM allows individuals to alter their rule systems in order to accommodate changing needs, new situations, topics and relational information. For the current study, respondents described avoiding disclosure to certain people based on the taboo nature of the topic or negative repercussions of previous disclosures. Boundaries had to be redefined to protect the discloser from negative consequences. Qualitative interviews allowed respondents to discuss how they had developed disclosure rules for the taboo topic of abortion.

CPM theory provides researchers with a way to understand the strategy and decision making processes that go into handling the tension between revealing and concealing private information. Two research questions in the current study asked respondents to identify relationships they disclosed and avoided disclosing to when they were faced with an unintended pregnancy. This unique strategy provided insight into respondent's internal, cognitive, disclosure rules that had been developed through previous interaction with potential confidants. CATPAC cluster analysis of the respondent's own words then identified the specific relationships as well as global definitions and characteristics of relationships respondents both sought out and avoided when making disclosure decisions about a taboo topic. Additionally, in order to extract

the rules for disclosure identified in the clusters of text, a more qualitative, modified form of textual analysis was conducted. This phase of analysis examined the clusters of words for answers to the questions of "why" or "why not" certain relationship were sought out or avoided for disclosure. This analysis was needed to identify the specific rules for disclosure or nondisclosure developed through interaction and identified by the respondents.

Discussion of Research Question Number One

Research question number one specifically investigates the public side of the disclosure dialectic by asking respondents to identify not only who they chose to disclose to but to identify the specific relational or personal qualities that made this person a desirable confidant. By using the software analysis program CATPAC, eight thematic clusters were identified through semantic analysis of the respondent's own words. Of these eight clusters, six identified a specific person or relationship while two clusters identified more global conditions for disclosure. Further analysis of each cluster yields information relating to two of the three steps identified by CPM as underlying all disclosure decisions. Research question one clearly shows respondents reflecting on their process of rule development and boundary coordination by describing the conditions by which disclosure decisions were made. Figure 15 visually represents the rules for disclosure identified for each relationship.

"Girlfriend" Cluster

The "girlfriend" cluster specifically identifies a female friend, in the respondent's life, who was considered a low risk choice to confide in about her unintended pregnancy. The use of the relational label of girlfriend carried with it very specific considerations. In

this cluster, CATPAC found the words abortion, everything, girlfriend, support, right, kids and things were closely connected to each other in the respondent text. These conceptual linkages suggest that when faced with an unintended pregnancy, respondents specifically sought out a supportive girlfriend, who the respondent knew she could trust. This answers the question of "who" but what remains is the identification of "why" this particular girlfriend was trusted and chosen over another. Textual analysis identified certain categories of rules for disclosure that were consistent across all of the "girlfriends" identified in this cluster. These rules for disclosure are underlying, cognitive structures (rules) respondents had developed through previous experience and interaction with their chosen confidant regarding similar taboo topics. Specifically, confidants had a communication history with the respondent, previous experience with kids or abortion, certain desirable personal qualities and had engaged in reciprocal disclosure of a taboo topic with the respondent at some point in their relationship.

The CPM steps of rule development and boundary coordination are clearly identified within the disclosure rule of "History" in the girlfriend cluster. Respondent descriptions contained in this category describe specific events in the relational past of these two women where disclosure rules for their private information had been developed and tested. When asked why this particular girlfriend was sought out for disclosure, it was common for respondents to say things like, "we have been through a lot together," "we talk about everything," and "she knows me so well" as justification for sharing taboo information with this particular woman. Additionally, issues of boundary coordination were identified when respondents frequently described their confidant as having "kept secrets in the past." These shared relational events not only allowed the respondent to

develop their "rules for disclosure" (Petronio, 2002) but tested the boundary coordination of the relationship with positive results.

"Personal qualities" emerged as another disclosure rule with regard to the relational label of girlfriend. Female confidants were described as "Understanding," "Supportive," and "Trustworthy." Identification of these qualities assured the respondent that their confidant would "not judge" would "withhold opinions," and would be "comfortable" with the taboo information respondents needed to disclose. These examples illustrate the respondents taking into consideration not only how their disclosure would be treated by her confidant, but also how her disclosure would affect her confidant. CPM further suggests that during rule development, individuals take into consideration the impact that the information will have on the other individual and whether or not the recipient can handle it. Rawlins (1992) argues that revealing personal thoughts and feelings to another is an integral part of developing and maintaining a friendship. However, to avoid hurting themselves or their friend, individuals have to practice restraint in their disclosures by avoiding "touchy issues" (p. 22). This suggests that in order to preserve the friendship, respondents chose a girlfriend they believed would be "comfortable" with the topic and act of abortion.

Another rule for disclosure, identified in the girlfriend cluster, was that of reciprocity. Respondents consistently identified one of two reciprocal acts when describing how they knew their confidant was a safe choice. First, many respondents described having communicated with their confidant previously about topics of a taboo nature (i.e., birth control, sex, etc.). Comments such as "I tell her things and she tells me things" were common. This generally suggests a reciprocal nature of communication

about taboo topics. Secondly, in addition to having communicated with confidants in the past, respondents reported having helped her confidant with past abortions or unintended pregnancies, meaning her confidant had confided in her previously about a similar situation. This condition was crucial in respondent's disclosure decisions. Reciprocity of disclosure significantly lessens the risk of being judged or having the confidant respond in a negative manner.

It is interesting to note, as discussed in the literature review of this study, Dindia and Allen's (1995) meta-analysis of past self-disclosure research found little support for a connection between self-disclosure and reciprocity when the studies utilized experimental, correlational, sequential analysis or social relations methodologies. However, Dindia and Allen (1995) concluded that while one person's self-disclosure may have a positive impact on their partner's self- disclosure, the partner may reciprocate at a later time. The current study provides clear support for this conclusion. Respondents in the current study indicated that a past disclosure from their confidant was an essential rule in their decision to disclose to this particular girlfriend. Reciprocity of disclosure may have occurred weeks or years after the initial disclosure, but one disclosure clearly had an impact on respondent's disclosure decision in this study. These results may also indicate that qualitative methodologies (process retrospectives, diaries, etc.) and other methods similar to those employed in the current study, are better suited for studying reciprocity and disclosure. Qualitative interviews coupled with semantic analysis of the transcribed text, gave the current study unique insight into the impact of reciprocity on rule development and disclosure.

Furthermore, within the framework of CPM, reciprocity provides additional reassurance when respondents were considering boundary coordination issues. Girlfriends who had sought out the respondent for support with a taboo topic in the past would be less likely to breach boundary lines when approached with a similar matter. Reciprocity strengthens the privacy boundaries and was a shared rule for disclosure when respondents chose a girlfriend as their confidant.

Finally, analysis of the "girlfriend" cluster indicated that "previous experience" was also considered a rule of disclosure when respondents were choosing a confidant. When asked why she chose to confide in this particular girlfriend, respondents often stated that her confidant had also terminated pregnancies, given birth, or was currently pregnant. In addition to boundary coordination and added protection from the potential risks associated with disclosing a taboo topic, choosing confidants with previous experience allowed respondents to get their questions answered from a friend with firsthand experience. "She knows what I'm going through" was a very common statement from respondents who had chosen a girlfriend in which to confide.

"Boyfriend" Cluster

The "Boyfriend" cluster from research question number one contains the reflections of respondents who chose to confide in their boyfriends first about the unintended pregnancy. One interesting observation from this cluster is that respondents used the relational label of "boyfriend" when asked to identify the individual they chose to speak to first. Semantic analysis of the interview text identified the concepts of baby, person, don't, comfortable first, and time as being closely linked to the label of boyfriend. This suggests that when the label of boyfriend was used, the respondent felt she was in a

relationship and comfortable with this individual as opposed to the use of less connected or intimate labels such as "partner" or "father." The use of different labels when referencing the father of the current pregnancy also serves to identify different disclosure rules depending on the level of intimacy in the relationship. For example, a sense of connection was supported by the identification of two rules for disclosure in this cluster. Textual analysis of the "boyfriend" cluster identified confidence in the relationship and agreement as rules for disclosure with her boyfriend. First, respondents expressed confidence in the relationship through statements such as "We are really close," "I can trust him," "He likes me no matter what" and "I am comfortable talking to him." The relational label of "boyfriend" in addition to the descriptions of confidence in the relationship indicate that, unlike other relationships identified in the text, this was a positive relationship that was worthy of disclosure. While CPM does not address the use of relational labels as part of its theoretical basis, conceivably it is through the processes of rule development and boundary coordination that application of relational labels becomes appropriate. For these women, developing confidence in their relationship coincided with their knowledge that this boyfriend was a safe disclosure decision.

Another rule of disclosure indicated in the "boyfriend" cluster was that of "agreement." Statements such as "he feels the same way," or "he knows I don't want kids" were indications that respondents knew their decision to terminate was not going to be challenged by their boyfriend. This suggests that the respondent had already made the decision to terminate and was comfortable telling her boyfriend about her decision because she knew he would not disagree with her. Therefore, his perceived agreement with her decision had been identified as part of CPM rule development for disclosure in

this relationship. This was not the case for all respondents as will be indicated in subsequent clusters. Different rules were applied in situations where the respondent used the label of "partner" or "father," which suggests a lack of intimacy in the relationship or where the rule of agreement was not present.

"Extended Family" Cluster

The CATPAC extended family cluster encompasses a variety of different relationships in the respondent's life (i.e., aunt, grandmother, ex-husband, and girlfriend's parents) including her "partner" which is distinctly different from the boyfriends identified in the previous cluster. The relational label of partner is qualitatively different from the relational label of boyfriend suggesting a less intimate perception of the relationship by respondents. The label of boyfriend was accompanied by relational confidence and agreement whereas the term partner came with a sense of obligation where disclosure of an unintended pregnancy was concerned. When the respondent used the relational label of partner, textual analysis identified "obligation" as a rule for disclosure indicating the respondent was not relationally connected to this man but felt he had the right to know of her decision based on his status as the father of the child. Statements such as "He is the father," "He has the right to know" are evidence of this sense of obligation. Unlike the "boyfriend" cluster, there is no evidence of agreement or relational confidence in the text. The respondent had already made the decision to terminate and was simply informing her partner of that decision. Statements such as "He will get over it" imply that perhaps she knew her partner would not agree with her decision but due to a lack of relational connection, it was not a determining factor in the disclosure decision.

Again, CPM does not address the use of relational labels as part of the communication privacy management process but clearly, there are implications for rule development and boundary coordination based on the labels respondents applied to their relationship with the father of the baby. Labels suggest that the rule development process goes beyond risk assessment by also considering relational qualities before disclosing. Respondents who chose to disclose to her partner were not considering the risks, potential support or privacy issues associated with disclosing but applying the rule of obligation in these instances. Greene, Derlega, Yep and Petronio (2003) identified a similar situation where HIV positive individuals felt a "duty to inform" their status to certain relationships in their life. This sense of responsibility fueled the disclosure even if individuals were reluctant or feared repercussions. Similarly, respondent in the current study believed the father had the right to know about her choice and she had the obligation to tell him based on his connection to the pregnancy. Unlike other relational situations where the rules for disclosure are developed within the relationship, obligation to disclose is a rule for disclosure that conceivably has been developed outside of the current relationship but applied to the current situation.

Other relationships identified in the Extended family cluster (i.e., Aunts, Grandmothers, Girlfriend's Parents, etc.) had similar rules for disclosure to the girlfriend cluster. For example, respondents described a "history" with extended family members that assisted in the rule development necessary to disclose to extended family members. "Has always been there for me," "Has helped me previously," or "Helped my cousin" were all indicators that this person was a safe and helpful confidant. Also similar to the girlfriend cluster were descriptions of "personal qualities" that identified these

individuals as good confidant choices. “Doesn’t hold grudges,” “Very understanding,” “Makes me feel comfortable,” “Really open” and “Helpful” were all personal qualities described by respondents that helped them make the decision to disclose. One distinction from the girlfriend cluster is the implication of help coming from extended family members. Whereas girlfriends would be supportive, analysis of the text suggests that extended family members were sought out for the added benefit of help. This suggests that rule development and boundary coordination within the label of family, includes an aspect of assistance absent from other relational situations.

“Mom” Cluster

The next cluster identifies the respondent’s mom as her first choice for disclosure. CATPAC analysis associated the words anything, I, me talk, told, pregnant, feel and think with the concept of mom suggesting for these respondents communicating with their mothers about pregnancy and feelings is conceptually linked. Again, textual analysis was used to address the significant question of “why” these women chose to talk to their moms while other respondents did not.

Rules for disclosure identified in the mom cluster are similar to those indicated in the girlfriend cluster. For example, respondents who chose to speak to their mothers about abortion described them as having certain personal qualities that made them a safe choice for a potentially risky disclosure. Like the girlfriend text, respondents described their moms as being “understanding” and “not judgmental” when asked why they chose them as their confidant. Additionally respondents had knowledge of their mother’s “previous experience” with abortion or pregnancy. Similar to the girlfriend confidants, having knowledge of their mom’s choices made disclosing to her less risky than other

possible options. Furthermore, the mother's previous experience with unintended pregnancy allowed respondents to have a conversation with her about potential regrets, consequences or health issues associated with abortion. "She would know how I feel" reassured respondents that their mom was a safe choice for disclosure.

Respondent's knowledge of their mother's previous experience with abortion and pregnancy is linked to another rule for disclosure indentified in the mom cluster, that of "open communication." Respondents who chose to speak to their moms first reported a history of communicating with their mothers about other taboo topics thereby establishing rule development and boundary coordination that included potentially risky topics. Whether this communication came in the form of specific talks about reproductive issues (i.e., mom talked to me about birth control) or if it was just a general reassurance that her daughter could "talk to her about anything," mother's previous open communication and boundary management with daughters helped respondents to feel safe disclosing to their mothers. CPM would suggest that open communication between respondents and their mothers established rules for disclosure that included discussing abortion and other taboo topics. The current study provides the respondent's own words to support CPM.

In addition to previous experience and open communication as part of the rules for disclosure, text in the mom cluster indicates that respondents were confident in their relationships with their mothers. Sentiments such as "Mom loves me," and "Mom is my friend" were offered as justification for how they knew it would be safe to disclose to their mothers about an unintended pregnancy. Additionally, a description of the mother/daughter relationship as being "way close" suggests that the rules for disclosure

and boundary coordination had been established long before the current pregnancy occurred. Arguably, the combination of a history and open communication with their mothers not only established privacy boundaries but having tested those boundaries in the past gave these respondents a level of confidence in their relationships with their mothers that other respondents did not have.

Past research has shown that when it comes to issues related to sexuality, girls are more likely to approach their mothers (Afifi et al., 2008) rather than their fathers. Intuitively this action makes sense in that mothers and daughters share the same anatomy and reproductive health issues. However, the current research suggests that the comfort some respondents felt in approaching their mothers went far beyond biology. For every mother that was chosen as a confidant by respondents there is another respondent that actively chose not to disclose to her mother. The 8 out of 60 respondents who chose their moms to disclose to had the assurance of safety and support from their moms based on knowledge of previous experience, open communication and relationship confidence. As will be seen in discussion of the second research question, the other 52 respondents who did not have these established rules for disclosure with their moms, made different choices.

"Nonkin Sister" Cluster

The cluster labeled "nonkin sister" shows the respondents mixing their relational labels in order to justify their choice of confidants. With only three words identified by CATPAC (bestfriend, sister and close), this cluster shows respondents attempting to define their bond with specific women in their lives. One category emerged during the textual analysis of the non-kin sister cluster that showed respondents describing their past

experiences with this person and was therefore coded as history. Interestingly, when asked why they chose a certain person as a confidant, respondent described a historical connection to this person that crossed over traditional relational labels. For example, if her confidant was a friend, the respondent labeled her as being "like a sister." Whereas, if the confidant was a biological sister, the respondent labeled her as being like a "best friend." Statements such as "she is like a best friend," "We are close like best friends," or "My sister is my best friend," were common in this cluster. This phenomenon suggests that under certain circumstances, labels may rely more on the rules for disclosure than the actual biological connection between respondent and confidant. If individuals meet the criteria for disclosure, it does not matter what relational label is applied. For example, because I can safely disclose to her, my sister is my friend and my friend is like my sister. From the framework of CPM, boundary coordination and rule development informs disclosure choices not just the relational label.

"Husband" Cluster

CATPAC grouped only two words together for this cluster, husband and decision. The uniqueness of this combination of words suggests that the relational label of husband, unlike boyfriend or partner, necessitated discussion rather than disclosure. This is the only cluster where respondents described a decision to be made rather than a choice to be disclosed. When asked why they chose to speak to their husband first, respondents identified relational expectations we would likely see in a marital relationship. Textual analysis identified expectations such as, "Trust," "Respect," and "Support" as established rules in the respondent's marriage and the reason why they approached their husband first to discuss their pregnancy. Although agreeing to terminate the pregnancy was the end

result between the respondents and their husbands, married respondents were the only individuals in this study that approached their confidants for help making a decision. This insight may suggest a CPM disclosure rule established in marriage; major decisions are made together, rather than as individuals, when trust, respect and support for boundary management have been established. In this study, all married respondents chose to speak to their husbands first but it would be interesting to study whether or not these rules were present in marriages where the woman chose not tell her husband she had terminated.

"Friend Defined" Cluster

Up until this point, the CATPAC analysis identified individuals that were the respondent's first choice of confidant. The final two clusters identified in research question number one reveal more global descriptions of people who make good confidants. Additionally, these rules for disclosure mirror those identified in earlier relationship specific clusters. For example, the friend defined cluster contains the words friend, good and matter suggesting the definition of a good friend is someone who will always support you. Textual analysis of this cluster extracted the familiar disclosure rules of history, personal qualities and relationship confidence. As was the case in the girlfriend, extended family and non-kin sister clusters, when respondents reflected on the definition of a friend, extracted text described a history of support with that friend. For example, respondents discussed a friend having "been there [for them] the last time," or a general understanding that this person "will be there for me." This cluster reasserts the need for history between the respondent and her confidant suggesting that in order to reach the status of "good" friend, the two women will have known each other for an

extended period of time (i.e., “Friend since elementary school”) giving rule development and boundary coordination a chance to solidify.

Additionally, the friend defined cluster establishes that certain personal qualities are part of the global definition of friend. Specific to this cluster is the concept of understanding as a rule for disclosure. This rule category and subsequent qualities were identified as part of the mom, girlfriend and extended family cluster’s rules for disclosure. This suggests the importance of positive personal qualities as a disclosure rule across multiple relationships.

Lastly, textual analysis of the friend defined text provided evidence of relationship confidence being a global rule for disclosure. As was the case in the boyfriend and mom clusters, the idea that “good friends support you” establishes the need for trust in the relationship as part of rule development and boundary coordination. As will become evident in discussion of research question number two, many respondents opted not to speak to certain friends when the rule of relationship confidence was not present.

“Connections” Cluster

The final cluster identified by CATPAC for research question number one, housed the words relationship and together. The connection of these two words identifies the various bonds respondents had with their confidant. In this text, respondents are describing how they are logistically connected to their chosen confidant. “Living together” or “Working together” represented physical connections between the respondent and her confidant whereas “We’ve been through a lot together” indicates a more emotional connection. Regardless of whether a physical or emotional connection

existed, textual analysis of this cluster provides additional support for the importance of history as a rule for disclosure.

Summary of Research Question Number One

Textual analysis of research question number one yielded a variety of rules for self-disclosure, some of which appeared in a variety of clusters while other rules seemed to be relationship specific (see Table 8). For example, the category of personal qualities was identified as a disclosure rule for girlfriend, mom, and extended family as well as in the more global description of friend. This suggests that positive personal attributes are a necessary rule for disclosure when choosing a confidant. Similarly, history was identified as a rule for disclosure in the girlfriend, extended family, non-kin sister, connections and friend defined clusters. CPM argues that over time and through our experiences with others, we develop our rules for disclosure. The concept of history being a rule across four clusters supports this theoretical claim. Relationships that have more shared experiences will have had time and opportunity to establish boundary coordination.

Arguably, history with a confidant would further result in relationship confidence, which is also mentioned as a rule for moms and boyfriends specifically as well as friends in general. Confidence in the relationship is developed in conjunction with boundary coordination and rules for disclosure.

Lastly, the rule of previous experience appears in two of the three specifically female relationship categories (girlfriend and mom). This rule is supported by previous research, which suggests women seek out their mothers when the taboo topic has to do with reproduction or anatomy (Afifi et al., 2008). If disclosing to the respondent's mom

Table 8
CATPAC Clusters and Disclosure Rule Categories for Research Question One

Research Question One	**Relationship Specific**							**Not Relationship Specific**	
	Cluster	Girlfriend	Boyfriend	Extended Family	Mom	Nonkin Sister	Husband	Friend Defined	Connections
Rules									
Agreement			X						
History		X		X				X	X
Obligation				X					
Personal Qualities		X		X	X	X		X	
Previous Experience		X			X				
Reciprocity		X							
Open Communication					X				
Relationship Confidence			X		X			X	
Relationship Expectations							X		

was too risky, a trusted female friend was sought out instead. Specifically, a girlfriend with previous experience with abortion or other taboo topics was preferred.

In addition to general rules for disclosure being identified, relationship specific rules were also identified. For example, partner was the only relational label accompanied by the rule of obligation for disclosure. Respondents did not choose to disclose to this person for any reason other than they believed it was the right thing to do. This is distinctly different from the husband and boyfriend categories where agreement and relational expectations appear to be driving the choice to disclose. While some rules for disclosure are more global others are developed, as necessary, within the context of a specific situation.

Discussion of Research Question Number Two

While research question number one focused on the public half of the communication dialectic, research question number two allowed respondents to discuss their reasons for remaining private about their unintended pregnancy when it came to certain people in their lives. Furthermore, research question number one resulted in the CATPAC identification of individuals worthy of disclosure, while research question number two identified (with one exception) CATPAC clusters of concerns or circumstances that made disclosure to certain people too risky. Textual analysis of respondent text was again used to specifically identify categories of rules for nondisclosure in each of the CATPAC clusters.

"Forecasting" Cluster

In the forecasting cluster of research question number two CATPAC grouped the words abortion, tell, anything, I, know, think, father, care, need, boyfriend, and me. In this cluster, respondents are describing the negative reactions they predicted coming from certain people in their lives and subsequently their decision not to disclose to them. Two relationship specific labels appear in the CATPAC word cluster, father and boyfriend, which both reference the biological father of the baby. Through textual analysis and application of the question "why not," categories of rules for nondisclosure emerged from the text. When asked to describe why she did not want to disclose to the father of the baby, respondent text indicated apathy with regard to the relationship or the father's response to news of an unintended pregnancy. Statements such as "I knew his reaction," "Not a relationship" and "I didn't care" show indifference to the relationship or any input from the father regarding the respondent's decision to terminate. Apathy, as a category of nondisclosure, supports the argument from research question number one, that the use of the label "father" by respondents is indicative of a lack of connection between the father of the baby and the respondent. Therefore, it was common for respondents to state that she did not want to have the baby or even talk to the father because she perceived disclosure would connect her to the father and that was not a desirable outcome. The risks involved with disclosing to her partner outweighed any obligation the respondent may have felt toward the father.

While some respondents did use the label of boyfriend (to describe their connection to the father of the child) they still chose not to disclose to him for a variety of reasons. Textual analysis produced two categories of nondisclosure where the term

"boyfriend" was used by the respondent. First, respondents forecasted a negative outcome had she chosen to disclose. For example, "boyfriend would have gotten upset" was a common justification for not disclosing her pregnancy and termination to him. The second category of rules for nondisclosure indicates that respondents believed her boyfriend would have interfered with her decision to terminate. Unlike the women in research question one who had developed the rule of "agreement" with their boyfriends, the women who chose to avoid disclosing to him made statements such as, "He would have stopped me," or "He would fight my decision." It is interesting to note that these rules for disclosure are in direct opposition to those described in research question number one. Respondents who chose to disclose to her boyfriend did so because she relied on the CPM rules of confidence in the relationship and agreement when making her disclosure decision. Conversely, the women who chose not to disclose to her boyfriend did so because she knew he would have reacted negatively or even riskier was the possibility he would fight her decision. The concept of interference represents a clear violation of boundary management therefore, even though she felt she was in a relationship with the father, the rules for disclosure as outlined in research question one, were not met and therefore disclosure was too risky.

Lastly, textual analysis of the forecasting cluster produced a general category of "other people" to whom the respondent avoided disclosing. Text in this cluster shows many of the respondents were aware that her decision to terminate was a social taboo. Respondents expressed their awareness through statements like, "I didn't care what other people's decisions about abortion are," or "I didn't need other people dogging on me for

abortion." Ultimately, forecasting disagreement about abortion from potential confidants ruled them unsafe for disclosure.

"Timing" Cluster

The timing cluster produced by CATPAC represents respondents describing why this was simply the wrong time to be having a baby. Words included in this cluster (baby, having, believe, right) were found to correlate with respondents describing why this was the wrong time to be pregnant or for disclosure about the pregnancy. Textual analysis identified that respondent reasons for nondisclosure fell into one of two categories, circumstances either internal or external to her relationship with the father of the baby. Internally, respondents described relationship factors that made this an inopportune time to be pregnant. Statements such as "this is not a good situation for a baby," or "our relationship is not strong enough," were common among respondents who had chosen not to discuss the pregnancy or termination with her partner. Situational or external factors were also implicated as rules for nondisclosure. Respondents discussed a variety of circumstances external to the relationship that made disclosure too risky. For example, one respondent described a situation where her younger, 18-year-old sister, was also pregnant and had chosen to raise the baby. The respondent had observed the negative consequences her sister's decision was having on her parents and decided that disclosing her choice to terminate would be too much for them to handle. This story is another example of how CPM disclosure decisions may depend on a prediction of whether or not the recipient can handle the information (Petronio, 2002). In research question one, confidants were chosen based on the prediction that they would be "comfortable" with the respondent's choice to terminate. In the above story, the situation with her younger

sister and her perception that their parents could not handle any more difficult information, led her to keep the information about her pregnancy and termination private.

Other external factors had to do with undesirable geographic proximity (i.e., "Boyfriend living in AZ") or the father was having a baby with his "real girlfriend." Whether internal or external, these circumstances produced a situational rule that disclosure was inappropriate at this time.

"Nonpartner Relational Risks" Cluster

CATPAC analysis of the text identified the words couldn't, hard, decision, thing, family, married and girl as being textually correlated. The combination of these seven words were found to relate to respondents describing why she could not discuss her decision to terminate with her family. Textual analysis of this cluster resulted in two categories of nondisclosure rules when it came to the respondent's family. In this text, respondents are clearly describing protection of self and others as rules for non-disclosure. Many respondents stated that disclosing her decision to terminate "would devastate her family" or that she "didn't want to worry" her family. Therefore, respondents chose to protect her family and keep her decision to terminate private. The protection of others category in this cluster provides additional support for the CPM claim that part of rule development is considering whether or not the recipient would be able to handle the information. As mentioned before Rawlins' (1992) research suggests that part of being a good relational partner is considering whether or not our confidant can handle the information. The research on victims of sexual abuse and disclosure showed a similar consideration when making confidant choices. Similar to respondents in the current study, respondents in the Petronio et al., (1997) described assessing the

strength (whether or not they believed certain people could handle the information) of their confidant before disclosing. This supports the presence of a rule for disclosure or nondisclosure is a determination of how the confidant will be affected by the information.

Textual analysis of this cluster also showed respondents describing rules of nondisclosure meant to protect themselves and their decision as well. Women in this study chose nondisclosure when they were concerned that certain people in their lives would "try to make this decision" for her. Respondents who had made the decision to terminate did not want other people's feelings about abortion to challenge her decision. Many women also discussed that had she made the choice to give birth she would have been able to disclose to more people in her life. However, given the taboo nature of abortion, her safe confidant options were limited. Specifically, respondents claimed that their families would "support marriage and birth but not this." Clearly, the taboo nature of choosing to terminate a pregnancy had an impact on the rules for nondisclosure considered by respondents. This discussion is an excellent example of how the process of boundary coordination is frequently "revamped, changed or altered in some way in order to accommodate new situations" (Greene et al., 2003, p. 25). Rules for disclosure previously used by respondents may have had negative results if applied to her decision to terminate. Therefore, privacy was necessary to protect herself as well as her decision.

"Firsts" Cluster

The next cluster is composed of the words feel, first, people, sister, supportive and shows respondents reflecting on previous disclosure events in order to make disclosure choices about her decision to terminate. What distinguishes this cluster from others is that respondents are basing their current nondisclosure decision on actual, as

opposed to perceived, reactions they received from others the "first time" they had disclosed taboo information to them. These "firsts" were not necessarily previous abortions but were other taboo topics (i.e., sex, birth control, previous pregnancies, etc.) that resulted in a negative reaction or boundary turbulence from the confidant. Therefore, textual analysis produced the category of previous experience as a rule resulting in nondisclosure. "Dad reacted badly the first time," was a common statement and fueled the decision not to disclose this time. This condition for nondisclosure is also in direct opposition to the "history" rule of disclosure described in research question number one. CPM points out both positive and negative disclosure histories contribute to the development and modification of rules of disclosure. Whereas positive disclosure events are likely to result in additional boundary coordination, negative disclosure events are referred to as turbulence by CPM and result in modified rules being applied to the next potential disclosure. Boundary turbulence can result if people mistreat other's private information, respond negatively or fail to offer their support in response to the disclosure. Therefore, turbulence is likely to result in the modification of disclosure rules as was the case in this cluster. During the interviews, respondents clearly identified the situations leading to boundary turbulence resulting in their current decision to keep their choice private.

The firsts cluster also contains respondent text describing her ability to disclose the first time to certain people, but believing that a second time would damage their opinion of her. For many women impression management was a rule for nondisclosure when stating that it was important for certain people in her life to be satisfied with her. However, she believed disclosing to them a second or third time would damage their

impression of her, which was perceived as too risky. Impression management has been a common rule for nondisclosure throughout the disclosure literature (Afifi & Guerrero, 1995; Derlega et al., 1993; Rawlins, 1983). Feeling that disclosed information would cause disappointment or diminished opinion on the part of the confidant was not a risk worth taking and therefore resulted in a nondisclosure rule.

"Consequences" Cluster

The consequences CATPAC cluster contains the words, down, roommate, never, friend, kids and life and was found to illustrate respondents discussing a variety of negative results that would occur if she chose to disclose to certain individuals. While negative results constitute a rule for nondisclosure in and of itself, textual analysis extracted levels of severity respondents associated with potentially negative results. For example, like the forecasting cluster, interference was also perceived as a consequence of disclosing to the wrong person. Statements such as, "boyfriend would want to keep the baby," were common among respondents. Other respondents described more violent forms of interference where she feared physical harm (i.e., Boyfriend would have hunted me down) if she disclosed her termination to him.

Furthermore, textual analysis of the consequences cluster resulted in categories of rules for disclosure similar to those found throughout the discussion of research question two. Many respondents mentioned protecting others, "didn't want to let them down" or "she would feel like she had let me down if she knew," as a reason for nondisclosure. As was discussed in the non-partner relational risks cluster, CPM supports the idea that determining whether a potential recipient can handle taboo information is a major consideration in boundary coordination and rule development.

Textual analysis also resulted in the categorization of personal attributes as another rule for nondisclosure. In direct opposition to the positive personal attributes described in research question number one, this same category in research question number two houses a discussion of negative personal attributes that resulted in a nondisclosure decision. Whereas confidants in research question number one were described as "open," and "understanding" people respondents avoided disclosing to were often described as "not understanding," and "not open" in research question number two. For respondents in this study, positive personal attributes resulted in disclosure whereas, negative personal attributes led to disclosure avoidance.

Respondents further identified disagreement as a reason for choosing not to disclose her decision to terminate to certain people in her life. Knowing that a certain friend "doesn't believe in sex before marriage" or that they specifically "wouldn't approve" of her decision constituted a rule for nondisclosure.

Lastly, several of the younger respondents mentioned issues of boundary turbulence as a primary rule for nondisclosure. Specifically respondents reported, "19 year old females would blab" as a reason for not disclosing her decision to terminate to many of her younger female friends. CPM argues that not being able to trust others to protect our private information is a serious and common consideration when managing privacy boundaries.

"Parents" Cluster

The parents cluster is the only relationship specific cluster identified by CATPAC in research question number two. Housing the words dad, mom, parent, pregnant, and talk, this cluster represents respondent text describing why she actively chose not to

disclose her decision to terminate to her biological parents. Textual analysis of this cluster resulted in six categories of rules for nondisclosure when it came to the respondent's biological parents.

The first category of rules in the parents cluster, very clearly identifies respondent knowledge of her parent's beliefs, attitudes and values (BAVs) as establishing a rule of nondisclosure. Respondents frequently mentioned their parents religion and how their beliefs made it too risky for her to disclose her choice to terminate to them. Specifically, statements such as "mom is very catholic," or "parents are incredibly LDS" were prevalent. Based on her parent's religious beliefs, it was common for respondents to speculate that her parents would support this pregnancy if she were choosing to get married and give birth (i.e. "My parents would support marriage, but not this"). It is interesting to note here that pregnancy, even outside of marriage, was less taboo than termination and potentially a topic these women would have discussed with their parents. This lends support to the notion that varying levels of taboo require different disclosure rules and boundary coordination. While an unintended pregnancy was one level of taboo, respondents felt they could have approached their parents with the choice to give birth or marry the father. However, abortion was a higher level of taboo and a direct violation of her parent's BAVs, thereby making disclosure to them too risky.

Other parental BAVs discussed were political ("Dad is conservative") as well as cultural ("Based on my culture, my parents would be very disappointed"). Knowledge of her parent's BAVs established a rule that an abortion was too taboo a topic for disclosure.

The remaining five categories identified through textual analysis of the parents cluster, were also identified in previous clusters. For example, respondents who perceived

negative outcomes from disclosing to their parents chose nondisclosure. Respondents made comments such as “I was scared,” “Mom would have a cow,” or “Dad would react badly” when asked why they chose not to discuss their choice to terminate with their parents. Many of the younger respondents described difficulty even discussing having a boyfriend with her parents and thereby believing that the topics of pregnancy and abortion were highly taboo and too risky. Specifically, “My parents can’t even deal with me having a boyfriend…” resulted in the decision to avoid discussing her pregnancy and subsequent termination with her parents.

Impression management was another common rule firmly established in the parent cluster as well as the firsts cluster. “They still look at me like I’m a little girl,” or “Pregnancy would be another disappointment” show respondents concern over how their parents would feel about them if they knew she had chosen to terminate a pregnancy. Damaging her parent’s perception of her was too great a risk to take when choosing a confidant in this situation. Interestingly, respondents mentioned the desire to manage the impression her dad had of her more often than being concerned about her mother’s impression of her. Frequently respondents mentioned their dad specifically when discussing the rule of impression management and nondisclosure. Statements such as, “I feel like I am disappointing dad,” “I would feel funny talking to dad” or “I’m still daddy’s little girl” were mentioned more frequently than impression management issues associated with mom. Petronio (2002) suggests that one of the most consistent patterns found in research on parent-child interactions concerns the rule regarding which parent typically receives information from the children. Especially during adolescence, moms tend to receive more disclosure from their children, while fathers seem to receive less

information overall (Jourard, 1971; Denolm-Carey & Chabassol, 1987). Petronio (2002) argues that this may be the result of mothers being perceived as "more nurturing and supportive" (pp. 153-154) when rules of disclosure are being established. This previous research may somewhat explain why respondents were more concerned about impression management with their fathers than with their mothers. Conceivably, if adolescents have disclosed to their mothers previously without damaging their impression, the practice of disclosing to mom has been tested and determined safe.

In addition to managing the impression her parents had of her, respondents also discussed the need to protect her parents from her decision. As a rule for nondisclosure, respondents discussed not wanting "to worry parents" or "put parents in that situation" as justification for not disclosing to them. One respondent claimed that her dad "shouldn't have to live with my decision forever" when asked why she chose not to discuss termination with her parents. Additional statements such as, "mom would blame herself," and "my parents have too much going on" show respondents considering the impact this information would have on her parents (and whether or not they could handle it) as part of establishing rules for disclosure.

Similar to the consequences cluster, boundary turbulence appeared in the parents cluster as a rule for nondisclosure. Many respondents reported wanting to talk to her mother about the pregnancy and her decision to terminate but knew her mother would tell her father. "Mom would talk to dad," was frequently given as an explanation for not disclosing to her mom, even though she wanted to. This is a clear example of what CPM describes as boundary turbulence in that the respondent's moms were responsible for coordinating boundaries with her husband in addition to her daughter. In her discussion

of Inclusive Boundary Linkages, Petronio (2002) specifically mentions the parent-child relationship as one where role linkage occurs. Role linkages are formed when "person B, as a function of his or her role relationship, becomes involved in an inclusive coordination pattern that manages private information with person A" (p. 128). While this inclusive pattern is beneficial when children are young, Petronio (2002) argues "the need to shift out of the inclusive pattern and into other ways of dealing with privacy needs when children move into more adult roles" (p. 129). Petronio (2002) also discusses something called a "confidant privacy dilemma" where a confidant may feel the need or obligation to disclose someone else's private information to a third party. In the case of marriage, the mom may feel an obligation to her husband to include him in on disclosures from their children. Respondents understanding the boundary linkages between her parents chose to avoid disclosing to her mother rather than risk her dad finding out about her decision to terminate.

Lastly, a common rule for disclosure also appearing in the "parent" cluster is that of perceived interference coming from the respondent's parents. In the forecasting, and consequences clusters, respondents chose not to disclose their decision to avoid any potential interference with regard to her decision. This is a similar concern when it came to disclosing her choice to terminate her pregnancy to her parents. Respondents mentioned challenges such as, "Parents would try to talk me out of it" or specifically "Dad would try to help me decide" as a reason to avoid disclosure to them.

Similar to the rules for disclosure identified in research question number one, many of the rules for nondisclosure identified in research question number two crossed over relationships or circumstances (see Table 9). For example, any perceived negative

outcomes or interference presented a consistent rule for nondisclosure in the parents and forecasting clusters with interference also appearing in the consequences cluster. Similarly, protection of others appeared in the parents, consequences and non-partner relational risks clusters while issues of boundary turbulence were extracted from the consequences and parents clusters. Finally, impression management was a common rule for disclosure identified in the parents and firsts clusters. This phenomenon suggests that like the rules for disclosure identified in research question number one, certain rules for nondisclosure are also universal when it comes to disclosing a taboo topic. CPM accounts for this phenomena when discussing that certain disclosure rules are "routinized" and are appropriate across a variety of topics and relationships (Greene et al., 2003, p. 25). However, CPM allows for the fact that new relationships and topics result in the need for unique rules of disclosure to be developed. When a taboo topic is concerned, individuals may recognize that disclosing to certain people could result in negative consequences. As a result, "this person's situation has changed and so too must the privacy rules used to manage revealing and concealing. Thus, "privacy rules are revamped, changed or altered in some way to accommodate the new situations" (Greene et al., 2003, p. 25).

As the theoretical foundation of this study, CPM provided a rule based system to examine the way people make decisions about balancing disclosure and privacy. The psychological and physical benefits of disclosure have been well documented in past research (Derlega et al, 1993; Pennebaker, 1995; Wills, 1990). However, despite the benefits of self-disclosure, a fair amount of risk goes with disclosing our private information to other people. When our private information is taboo, there is a heightened

Table 9
CATPAC Clusters and Nondisclosure Rule Categories

Research Question Two	**Not Relationship Specific**						**Relationship Specific**
	Cluster	Forecasting	Timing	Nonpartner Relational Risk	Firsts	Consequences	Parents
Rules							
Apathy		X					
BAVs							X
Boundary Turbulence						X	X
Disagreement						X	
External Factors			X				
Impression Management					X		X
Interference		X				X	X
Negative Outcome		X					X
Previous Experience					X		
Protection of Others				X		X	X
Protection of Self				X			
Relationship Factors			X				
Social Taboo		X					

risk to the discloser. Therefore, according to CPM individuals must engage in a risk/benefit assessment before choosing to disclose to private information to others (Petronio, 2002). The current study allowed for the examination of the respondent's own words as evidence of their privacy management and rule development when making disclosure decisions with regard to choosing to terminate a pregnancy.

A woman's right to choose an abortion is highly controversial and therefore an extremely risky topic for disclosure. Given the taboo choice current respondents had made, disclosure rules and outlets they had relied on previously may not have been appropriate for their current situation. Therefore, these women had to develop new rules for disclosure that allowed them to seek out support while managing the risks involved with disclosure. By asking respondents to discuss both why they chose to disclose to certain people in their lives while actively avoiding disclosure to others, the current study provides insight into the CPM process of rule development and boundary coordination where a taboo topic was concerned. Many of the rules identified by the current study crossed over relational and situational contexts giving credence to CPMs notion that some rules are developed personally through the process of socialization. However, each relationship and context identified by CATPAC came with a variety of disclosure rules that were unique to that cluster reinforcing Petronio's (2002) concept that many of our disclosure rules are negotiated as we form relationships and develop collective boundaries. The current analysis of respondent text gives greater depth and credence to CPM by allowing these women to describe the process in their own words. Semantic analysis of the transcribed interviews allowed the underlying cognitive structures, these women used to make their disclosure decisions, to emerge from the text rather than being

imposed externally. This method takes the research one step closer to a relational analysis of communication privacy management.

Future Research

While the current study has advanced the theoretical frameworks used to model how individuals make disclosure decisions, it has also opened up questions that should be addressed by future research. First, the unwillingness of respondents to confide in males (other than husbands) and especially their fathers is troubling. What is it about masculine communication patterns that made them unsuitable for disclosure? Results from the current study suggest that this trend is about more than just biology. Previous experience with pregnancy and abortion was just part of the reason why women were selected over men for disclosure. Personal qualities and communication history also played a large role in the development of disclosure rules. Future research needs to focus on identifying the barriers and communication choices that keep men from being chosen as confidants.

Second, previous research has established friendship as another key interpersonal relationship where individuals may or may not choose to discuss sexuality. Future research should focus on sex communication patterns in peer relationships and how these patterns lead to the development of rules different from those developed in other relationships. Identification of these communication patterns and rules would lead to more focused sex education encouraging open and factual discussion of sex and sexuality among friends.

A third area for future research would be to address the different verbal and nonverbal communication patterns present during the early years of childhood development. Previous research has established the topic of sex as taboo and found it to

be the topic adolescents avoid most with their parents. However, several respondents chose to disclose to their mothers under certain circumstances. While not addressed in the current study, the existence of respondents who chose to speak to their mothers based on previous open communication including taboo topics and knowledge of her mother's previous experiences with pregnancy and abortion suggests rule development in the formative years shapes rule application later in life. This is especially critical in helping parents understand how to establish open lines of communication with children that will allow open discussions of sex and sexuality prior to and during adolescence. Most Americans agree that topics of sex and sexuality should be discussed in the home. However, without the establishment of certain disclosure rules during childhood, teens will continue to avoid these discussion with their parents during the critical adolescent years.

Fourth, future research needs to focus on the confidant and the consequences of being the recipient of taboo disclosures. Petronio (2006) touched on this need by suggesting there are challenges to being the confidant of a physician who has made a medical mistake. While not addressed by the current study, it is conceivable that receiving news of a woman's decision to terminate a pregnancy could put the confidant in a situation where they feel the obligation to include a third party in on this information. Respondent discussions of why they chose not to disclose to their mothers knowing she would talk to the respondent's father alludes to the idea that some confidants may be juggling the boundary coordination of multiple relationships. Boundary coordination of parenting teams could come into conflict when managing the disclosure boundaries of

parent/child disclosures. The process of coordinating competing boundary coordination demands is an untapped area for research.

Additionally, given the role reciprocity played in the current examples of boundary coordination, future research would benefit from using more qualitative methodologies for the collection of self-disclosure stories. As evidenced by the stories of reciprocity coming from the women in this study, self-disclosure reciprocity is not necessarily contained within the confines of a single conversation. Sometimes reciprocal acts occur years later and their benefits would be missed if only relying on empirical data collection methods. This is not to say that self-disclosure research does not benefit from quantitative methods. While CATPAC is used to analyze qualitative texts, its quantitative nature is invaluable in identifying frequently used words and thematic clusters of text within large amounts of data. This approach reduces the more subjective qualities of manual text analysis and provides insights not available through purely qualitative methodologies.

Lastly, the current study identified some interesting issues with relational labels and their use in the process of boundary coordination and rule development. As was discussed earlier, certain labels used to address individuals who were chosen or not chosen as confidants coincided with unique rules for disclosure. Examples of this include the respondent's use of boyfriend or father when describing the father of the child or the swapping of relational labels between sister and best friend. These phenomena open up questions about what relational labels mean and how they are invoked at different times and under different circumstances. The theory of communication privacy management does not account for relational labels and the impact they potentially have on boundary

management. Future research with regard to this connection could provide additional valuable insights into the process people go through when making disclosure decisions.

Limitations

While several significant insights were found in this study, it is not without limitations. The largest limitation of this study has to do with how women were chosen for participation. Permission was given by Planned Parenthood and the research coordinator for women to be approached in while recovering after their procedure. Women were approached and asked if they would like to participate in a brief interview about their experiences. Additionally clinic nurses pointed out patients who were exceptionally talkative and communicating openly about their situation. Therein lies the first limitation. This research does not account for women who are not comfortable with disclosure. Only women who were prone to high disclosure were included in the sample. Those women who were not comfortable talking about their situation were not part of the research. While ethically women could not be forced to participate in this study, it is unfortunate to lose the insights and experiences of women who are not comfortable with self-disclosure nor is it clear how one could operationalize this. Different methodological choices may help to capture the stories of women who are less at ease with disclosure. For example, self-administered computer questionnaires might be more comfortable for low disclosers than face-to-face interviews. Both methodologies could be used in conjunction to capture at least some information from those potential respondents who are uncomfortable with the face-to-face interviews.

The second limitation of this study deals with research question number two and the fact that CATPAC analysis did not result in the identification of specific individuals

who were excluded from disclosure. Although both research questions were identical in structure, analysis of the first research question identified specific individuals sought out for disclosure, while analysis of the second research question resulted primarily in clusters of circumstances or global types of people that were not ideal for disclosure. Insights were still gained from research question number two but the ability to further reflect on relational labels and their significance to the process of boundary coordination was lost. If future research is to incorporate relational labels and analyze their impact on rules for disclosure, it will be necessary for researchers to probe for specific relationships to which respondents avoided disclosing.

Conclusion

The research conducted in this study illuminates the process individuals go through when making disclosure choices regarding a taboo topic. The current research extends the existing body of research on self-disclosure through the incorporation of CPM and provides a semantic analysis of the respondent's own words. An important theoretical contribution to CPM is context specific rules of disclosure. Respondents identified a variety of situations and circumstances that contributed to their rules for disclosure (i.e., family, relationship and personal contexts, etc.). Many of these contexts were identified by the use of relational labels. CPM does not account for a connection between rules of disclosure and relational labels, but the current study has established this as an important concept that should be included in the theory.

Given that the rules for disclosure change when the private information is taboo, it is important to understand what factors individuals take into account when considering the risks/benefits of sharing their information with others. An awareness of this process

and the rules developed by disclosers has the potential to help parents build stronger and more open relationships with their children, and clinicians to find ways to approach patients in a manner that will allow them to feel comfortable disclosing symptoms and concerns. Disclosure is a necessary and beneficial part of relationship development and maintenance but without an understanding of the risks involved it is impossible to fully appreciate the process individuals go through to make disclosure decisions. In the words of a respondent, “Abortion is nothing to be ashamed of, but you can’t exactly go around telling everybody.”

APPENDIX A

CONSENT TO BE INTERVIEWED FORM

CONSENT TO BE INTERVIEWED AND TO TAPE THE INTERVIEW

I CONSENT TO BE INTERVIEWED ABOUT THE EXPERIENCES I HAVE HAD WITH CONTRACEPTION AND PREGNANCIES. I ALSO CONSENT TO HAVING THE INTERVIEW TAPED. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE INFORMATION WILL BE USED TO HELP PLANNED PARENTHOOD ASSOCIATION OF UTAH TO DEVELOP MORE WAYS TO ASSIST OTHER WOMEN WHO ARE INTERESTED IN THESE ISSUES.

I HAVE ALSO BEEN TOLD THAT SOME OF THE QUESTIONS MAY MAKE ME UNCOMFORTABLE. I UNDERSTAND THAT MY PARTICIPATION IS VOLUNTARY AND THAT I CAN HAVE THE TAPE TURNED OFF OR WITHDRAW FROM THE INTERVIEW AT ANY TIME. I AGREE TO HAVE MY COMMENTS REPORTED WITH THOSE OF OTHER PEOPLE WITHOUT ANY PERSONALLY IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

- ❑ I NOW AGREE TO BE INTERVIEWED.
- ❑ I NOW GIVE PERMISSION TO TAPE THIS CONVERSATION.

INTERVIEWEE: _____

INTERVIEWER: _____ DATE: _____

PLEAST CONTACT EITHER OF THE FOLLOWING IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS INTERVIEW:

1. Lynda Ion

2. Dora G. Lodwick, Ph.D.
   REFT Institute, Inc.
   897 E. Panama Dr., Suite 404
   Littleton, CO. 80121
   888-477-7378

APPENDIX B

PREGNANCY OUTCOME SURVEY

PREGNANCY OUTCOME SURVEY

INTRODUCTION:

My name is _____, I am working with Planned Parenthood Association of Utah to find out more about how to provide women with what they need to have children when they decide that they want to have a child. We know that this is a very complex issue. I hope that you will help us by sharing some of your experiences with me. We hope to use what we learn from you to assist other women.

I want you to know that this interview is confidential. That means that I will tell no one, except people in the research team, what you tell me. Your comments will be added to the statements of other women without mentioning any names.

I must advise you that you may feel uncomfortable with some of the questions because some of the questions are about things that are pretty personal. They may bring memories back to you that make you sad. At any time, you can ask me to skip a question you don't want to answer for this interview is voluntary.

That means you may choose not to be interviewed. However, your experiences are important to us. We believe that it is only by gathering this kind of information that we will be able to help other women. Whatever you decide will not affect the services that you will receive.

Now, I would like you to listen while I read this permission to be interviewed and to have the interview taped. [HAND A COPY OF THE PERMISSION TO THE PERSON. THEN START READING YOU COPY]. I am required to read it, so please bear with me.

Do you have any questions about this? [PAUSE] Please sign here. [HAVE THER PERSON SIGH THE PERMISSION SLIP. KEEP THE SIGNED ONE AND GIVER HER A COPY OF AN UNSIGNED ONE.]

Thank you.
Do you have any other questions?
Let us begin then.

TIME BEGIN:_____	TIME END: _____	
DATE: _____	INTERVIEWER: _____	
GENERAL OBSERVATIONS:		
1ST Trimester	Pre-Procedure	Recovery Room
2nd Trimester	Post-Procedure	Private Room

I. **The first set of questions are about your background. This will help us learn a little more about your experiences.**

1. Where are you living now? _____(town) _____(state).

2. About how far is that from the clinic? _____(minutes) or _____(hours).

3. How did you get here? _____ (transportation).

4. Did you come alone to the clinic or did you come with someone else?

   _____ (relationship if volunteered)

5. How many persons, including yourself, usually live in your household? _____

6. I would like some information about each member of your household starting with yourself: I don't need to know their names, but I will need to refer to them, so please tell me their relationship to you and whether they are male or female.

Relation-ship	Respondent			
Gender	Female	M F	M F	M F
Age at last birthday How old was ---at the last birthday?				
Marital status [CARD] Please look at card A. What is the current marital status of … ? (IF OVER 10)	○ Single, never married ○ Single, living together ○ Married ○ Widowed ○ Divorced ○ Separated	○ Single, never married ○ Single, living together ○ Married ○ Widowed ○ Divorced ○ Separated	○ Single, never married ○ Single, living together ○ Married ○ Widowed ○ Divorced ○ Separated	○ Single, never married ○ Single, living together ○ Married ○ Widowed ○ Divorced ○ Separated

Education of adults [CARD] Please look at card B. What is the highest grade level or year of regular school completed by…?	o Elementary or junior high grade _____ o High school grade _____ o College and graduate school o Don't know o Refused	o Elementary or junior high grade _____ o High school grade _____ o College and graduate school o Don't know o Refused	o Elementary or junior high grade _____ o High school grade _____ o College and graduate school o Don't know o Refused	o Elementary or junior high grade _____ o High school grade _____ o College and graduate school o Don't know o Refused
Employ-ment [CARD]	o Employed full-time (36 hours +) o Employed part-time (20 hours or less) o Housewife,Houseman o Student o Retired o Other	o Employed full-time (36 hours +) o Employed part-time (20 hours or less) o Housewife,Houseman o Student o Retired o Other	o Employed full-time (36 hours +) o Employed part-time (20 hours or less) o Housewife,Houseman o Student o Retired o Other	o Employed full-time (36 hours +) o Employed part-time (20 hours or less) o Housewife,Houseman o Student o Retired o Other

7. How many other people, including babies, were not included in the household listing? _____(number) [WRITE EXPLANATIONS GIVEN]

8. Where were you born? _____(state and/or country)

9. What do you consider your racial or ethnic background? _____

II. Now I would like to talk about pregnancies you may have had.

10. Including this pregnancy, how many times have you been pregnant?

    _____(number)

11. How many of your pregnancies resulted in a live birth? _____(number)

III. Now I would like to ask you some questions about what you think about pregnancy planning and prevention. I know that people have very different thoughts and experiences with pregnancies.

12. Some people believe that it is important to determine when and how many children they will have. Others believe that they have little control over when and how many children they will have. What would you say is your attitude? [**PROBE**: Please explain more about why you think this?]

Now think of numbers from 1-5. If 1 represents "no control" and 5 represents "complete control" what number represents the opinion most like your opinion? [**CARD**]

1----------2----------3----------4----------5
No control Complete control

13. Do you want to have (another child/children) of your own sometime?
    - □ No [GO TO QUESTION 15]
    - □ Yes

14. How many children of your own do you want in all? _____(number)

15. I am going to read out a number of possible reasons for NOT WANTING a(nother) child. Could you please tell me for each of them whether, for you personally, that reason is important or not important at this time. [**CARD**]

	Important	Not Important	DK
a. Children are expensive especially when they group up.	□	□	□
b. Children make it harder for a woman to have a job.	□	□	□
c. Pregnancies, births, and the care of children are hard on a woman.	□	□	□
d. There would not be enough time for other important things in life.	□	□	□
e. Bringing up children creates many worries and problems.	□	□	□
f. My house isn't suitable for a larger family.	□	□	□
g. My partner does not want another child.	□	□	□
h. I don't want a child with this particular partner.	□	□	□
i. Other; **[PROBE**: Is there another reason?]	□	□	□

16. Of those reasons that you have said are important for NOT WANTING a(nother) child, which ONE would you say is the single most important for you personally at this time?

_____ (letter)

[**PROBE**: Tell me more about why that is so important to you?]

17. I am going to read out a number of possible reasons for WANTING a(nother) child. Could you please tell me for each of them whether, for you personally, that reason is important or not important at this time. [**CARD**]

	Important	Not Important	DK
a. Children make it less likely that one will be lonely in her old age.	□	□	□
b. Children give a sense of responsibility and help a person to develop.	□	□	□
c. It is a fine thing to see children grow up and develop.	□	□	□
d. It gives satisfaction to see the family carried on.	□	□	□
e. Having children gives a special feeling of joy.	□	□	□
f. Having children strengthens the relationship with the partner.	□	□	□
g. Having children gives me someone to love and to be loved by someone.	□	□	□
h. Having children may give me sons.	□	□	□
i. Other; **[PROBE**: Is there another reason?]	□	□	□

18. Of those reasons that you have said are important for WANTING a(nother) child, which ONE would you say is the single most important one for you personally at this time? _____(letter)
[**PROBE**: Tell me more about why that is so important to you?]

19. In the case of this pregnancy, at the time you became pregnant, did you want to have a baby at some time?

- □ Yes
- □ Don't know
- □ No

20. Did you become pregnant sooner than you wanted, later than you wanted, or at about the right time?

    - □ Sooner
    - □ Later
    - □ At about the right time
    - □ Don't know

21. When you got pregnant, were you or your partner using any kind of birth control? Birth control means the pills, condoms, diaphragm, foam, rhythm, IUD, shots (Depo Provera) or ANY other way to keep from getting pregnant?

    - □ No [GO TO QUESTION 24]
    - □ YES → what method? _____

22. About how often did you (use/take) _____ before you got pregnant?

    - □ All the time
    - □ Most of the time
    - □ Some of the time
    - □ Occasionally
    - □ Rarely

23. Tell me about your experiences with the method.
    [**PROBE**: why they used it as they did; their belief about why they got pregnant]
    (GO TO QUESTION 25)

24. Tell me more about why you or your partner did NOT use any birth control at the time?

    - □ I wanted to get pregnant

- □ I didn't think I could get pregnant
- □ I had been having side effects from the birth control I used
- □ I didn't want to use birth control
- □ I didn't think I was going to have sex
- □ My partner didn't want to use birth control
- □ Other:

25. Do you plan to continue to (use/not use) (any/that) method?

- □ Yes
- □ No
- □ Maybe

26. Why are you planning to (continue/stop) using that method?

- □ Method failed: pregnancy
- □ Want a child
- □ Partner disapproved – Why?
- □ Side effects – What were they?
- □ Health concerns – What are they?
- □ Access/Availability – Where do you get it?
- □ Wanted other method – Which one?
- □ Inconvenient to use – How?
- □ No sexual relations
- □ Cost
- □ Other:

27. What other method or combination of methods have you and/or your partner(s) relied on for contraceptive purposes during 3 consecutive months or longer?

- □ Never used a particular method or combination or methods for 3 consecutive months or longer. [GO TO QUESTION 34]

28. Please indicate the contraceptive methods or combinations of methods that you have relied on starting with the first.

    a. pill
    b. IUD

c. shots (Depo-Provera)
d. diaphragm, foam, jelly, sponge
e. hysterectomy or tubaligation (self)
f. vasectomy of current partner
g. vasectomy of ex-partner
h. condom
i. periodic abstinence, rhythm, safe period
j. withdrawal
k. any other method
l. not applicable – no method

29. First: _____ starting age: _____

Stopping age: _____ Why stopped? _____

30. Second method(s): _____ stopping age: _____

Why? _____

31. Third method(s): _____ stopping age: _____

Why? _____

32. Fourth method: _____ stopping age: _____

Why? _____

33. Fifth method: _____ stopping age: _____

Why? _____

34. How old were you when you had sexual intercourse (vaginal penetration) for the FIRST TIME in your life?

_____(age)

35. At this first sexual intercourse, did you and/or your partner use anything to avoid your becoming pregnant, anything at all?

□ No ------→Why would you say that you didn't do or use anything?

□ Yes ----→What did you and/or your partner do or use?

□ Don't remember
[PROBE: Did you and your partner discuss using a birth control method?]

36. Generally, where do you get your contraceptive supplies or methods NOW?

□ Drug store
□ Friend or family member
□ Private physician
□ Health Maintenance Organizations (HMO)
□ School clinic
□ Family planning clinic
□ Women's health center
□ Hospital
□ Other: _____
□ Not applicable
□ Don't know

37. Generally, how satisfied are you with this (source)?

□ Very satisfied
□ Satisfied
□ Somewhat satisfied
□ Somewhat dissatisfied
□ Dissatisfied
□ Don't know
□ Not applicable

38. Please tell me more about why you feel [from #37] about your source.
[**PROBE**: what information is being given; how accessible is it to you?]

39. Have any of the following kept you from getting contraceptive methods and supplies when you needed them? [**CARD**]

□ I didn't have enough money or insurance to pay for my contraception
□ I had no way to get to the (source)
□ I couldn't get an appointment at a time when I needed it
□ I had no one to take care of my children

□ I had too many things going on
□ My partner does not want time to use birth control
□ Other: _____

IV. The following questions are about the relationship(s) you have with your partner(s).

40. Please describe the type(s) of relationship(s) you currently have with your partner(s). [**PROBE**: length and steadiness of the relationships]

41. We have talked about your desire to have a(nother) child or not. Does your partner want the same number of children you want, or does he want more or fewer than you do?

□ Same
□ More
□ Fewer
□ Don't know

V. For the rest of our conversation I would like to talk to you about the relationships in your life that you might have sought support from when you realized you were pregnant. These questions are designed to help me understand which of your relationships were most helpful to you in making this decision.

When you realized you were pregnant, whom did you go to first for support or advice?

_____(If a name is given, probe for relationship.)

Skip to questions for relationship type mentioned.

Family Member Questions (Mother, Father, Sibling, Aunt, Uncle, Cousin etc.).

- What about your relationship with your _____led you to discuss your pregnancy with him/her?
- How did you know that _____ would be helpful in this situation?
- Have you talked about sexuality issues with _____prior to becoming pregnant?
- Was talking about sex encouraged in your family?
- How did you know it was appropriate/inappropriate to discuss sexuality in your family?

Friendship Questions (Male Friend / Female Friend)

- What about your relationship with _____led you to discuss your pregnancy with him/her?
- How did you know which of your friends you could talk to about being pregnant?
- Have you talked about sexuality issues with _____prior to becoming pregnant?
- Why did you choose to talk to your friend versus other people (family, partner etc.)?

Partner Questions

- What about your relationship with _____ led you to discuss your pregnancy with him?
- Did you and your partner discuss what would happen if you became pregnant prior to becoming sexually involved?
- Why do you think you were comfortable discussing your pregnancy with _____.
- Have you ever been in a relationship where you didn't feel comfortable talking about sexuality issues? If yes, what is different about your current partner?

Now that we have talked about the people you sought out to discuss your pregnancy, I would like to ask you a couple of questions about people in your life that you chose not to approach for support/advice.

If a family member is not mentioned,

- Why did you choose not to discuss your pregnancy with a member of your family?
- What about your relationship with your parents or siblings made this topic one that you didn't want to discuss with them?
- Was talking about sex encouraged in your family?
- If not, why didn't you talk about sexuality issues with your family members?
- How did you come to believe that sexuality was not a topic to be discussed in your family?
- What do you think would need to be different about your relationships with your family members in order for you to have approached them about your pregnancy?

If a friend is not mentioned,

- Why didn't you choose to talk to one of your friends about your pregnancy?
- What things about your friendships would need to be different for you to have sought their support or advice about your pregnancy?
- Have you ever discussed sexuality issues with your friends?
- If so, what kinds of topics were discussed?
- If not, why?

If her partner is not mentioned,

- What about your relationship with your partner led you to not discuss your pregnancy with him?
- Was the decision to terminate your pregnancy a joint decision or yours alone?
- Why do you think you were not comfortable discussing your pregnancy with your partner?
- What do you think would have made you more comfortable approaching him in this situation?

- Did you and your partner discuss using contraception prior to sexual involvement?

  Why or why not?
- Do you ever want to discuss your decision to have an abortion with your partner?

  Why or why not?

42. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your experiences that may help other women?

Thank you very much for sharing your experiences with me. If you have any questions, please call either Lynda or Dora. Their telephone numbers are on the sheet I gave you.

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